School of Theology at Claremont
1001 1400302

ADDRESSES

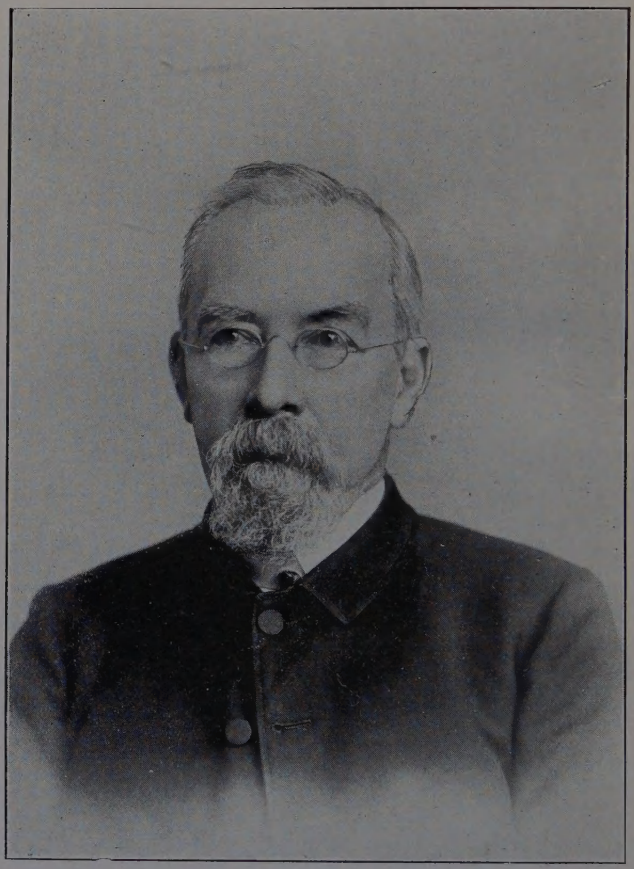
WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY CELEBRATION

1647-1897

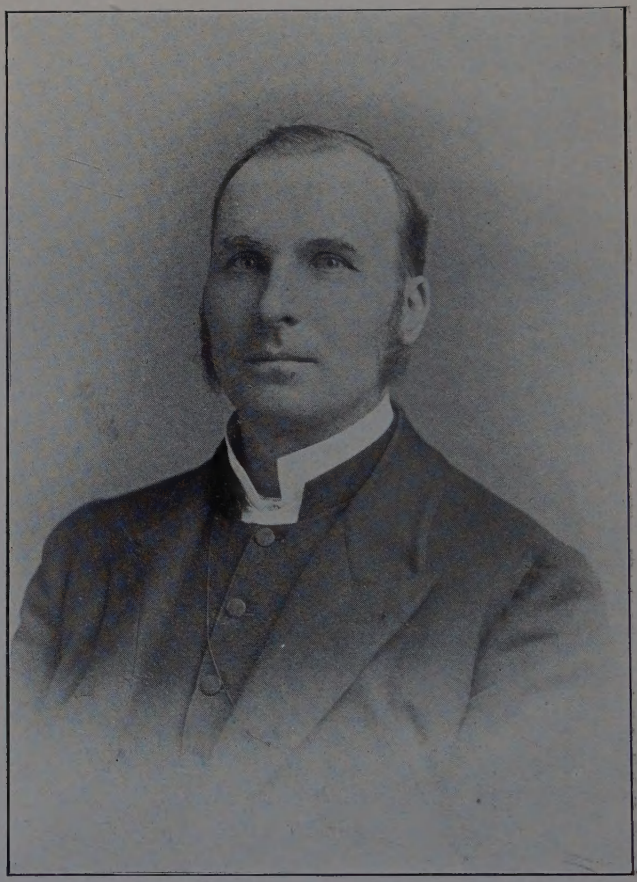
The Library

SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AT CLAREMONT

WEST FOOTHILL AT COLLEGE AVENUE
CLAREMONT, CALIFORNIA



REV. J. HENRY SMITH, D. D.



REV. FRANCIS R. BEATTIE, B. D. PH. D., D. D.

BX
9053
A5
P8
1897

MEMORIAL VOLUME

OF THE

WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

1647-1897.

CONTAINING ELEVEN ADDRESSES DELIVERED BEFORE THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES, AT CHARLOTTE, N. C., IN MAY, 1897.

IN COMMEMORATION OF

THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY, AND OF THE FORMATION OF THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS.

San Francisco
Theological Seminary
Alcove
Case
Shelf

SECOND EDITION.

Published by the direction of the General Assembly of 1897.

Richmond, Va.:
The Presbyterian Committee of Publication.

COPYRIGHT, 1897,

BY

JAMES K. HAZEN, *Secretary of Publication.*

White & Shepperson, PRINTERS
Richmond, Va.

PREFACE.

THE General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, held in 1896 at Memphis, Tenn., resolved to commemorate in some suitable way the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Westminster Assembly of Divines. It also appointed an *ad interim* committee to prepare an order of exercises for this celebration by the Assembly of 1897. This Assembly met at Charlotte, N. C., and these commemorative services were held in connection with its sessions. Eleven addresses of great excellence were delivered before the Assembly, and in the presence of very large audiences. The Assembly resolved to have these addresses published in a suitable volume, and appointed a small committee to coöperate with the Committee of Publication in issuing it. An Introduction is added, which may have some value, and the portraits inserted may give additional interest to the volume. May the blessing of the Head of the Church make these addresses, in this permanent form, of abiding service to the cause of truth and righteousness for many years to come!

FRANCIS R. BEATTIE,
CHARLES R. HEMPHILL,
HENRY V. ESCOTT,
The Assembly's Editing Committee.

School of Theology

CONTENTS.

INTRODUCTION. PAGE.

ASSEMBLY ACTION—WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY—BIBLIOGRAPHY, ... vii

I.

THE POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE TIME, ... 1

BY THE REV. HENRY ALEXANDER WHITE, PH. D., D. D.

II.

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION AT THE TIME, . . . 31

BY THE REV. ROBERT PRICE, D. D., LL. D.

III.

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY ITSELF, ... 53

BY THE REV. T. DWIGHT WITHERSPOON, D. D., LL. D.

IV.

THE DOCTRINAL CONTENTS OF THE CONFESSION, 87

BY THE REV. ROBERT L. DABNEY, D. D., LL. D.

V.

THE CATECHISMS, ... 115

BY THE REV. GIVENS B. STRICKLER, D. D., LL. D.

VI. PAGE.

THE POLITY AND WORSHIP OF THE STANDARDS, . 139

BY THE REV. EUGENE DANIEL, D. D.

VII.

THE RELATION OF THE STANDARDS TO OTHER CREEDS, ... 169

BY THE REV. JAMES D. TADLOCK, D. D., LL. D.

VIII.

THE STANDARDS AND MISSIONARY ACTIVITY, . . 185

BY THE REV. MOSES D. HOGE, D. D., LL. D.

IX.

THE STANDARDS IN RELATION TO CURRENT THEOLOGY, ... 219

BY THE REV. SAMUEL M. SMITH, D. D.

X.

THE STANDARDS IN RELATION TO FAMILY AND SOCIAL LIFE, ... 255

BY THE REV. JOHN F. CANNON, D. D.

XI.

THE STANDARDS AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT, . . 271

BY THE HON. WILLIAM M. COX, A. M.

INTRODUCTION.

By Rev. FRANCIS R. BEATTIE, B. D., Ph. D., D. D.,
Professor in Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary.

A SHORT chapter containing some account of the origin and purport of this volume may be of some interest to its readers. A brief recital of the action of the General Assembly which led up to the celebration at which these addresses were given will inform the reader in regard to the circumstances out of which this volume sprang. An outline of the history of the stirring and heroic period of which the Westminster Assembly formed at once the culmination of much that lay in the century before it, and the foundation of a great deal that rose in the century that followed its meeting, may help the reader to a simple and intelligent view of the historical setting of each address. In connection with this mere outline of the history of the period, the ordinance of Parliament convening the Assembly and the names of its members are both given. Some readers may have more than a passing interest in these matters. A partial Bibliography of the literature which has gathered round the Westminster Assembly and the memorable Symbols which it produced is included for the advantage of those who desire to pursue their study of these inviting topics at greater length.

In four brief sections this introductory chapter will deal with these separate topics·

I. THE ACTION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY.

The proposal to celebrate in some suitable manner the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the meeting and work of the Westminster Assembly of Divines was brought before the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States,[1] which met at Memphis, Tenn., in May, 1896. This proposal came formally before the Assembly by an overture and a resolution, in the following terms, respectively:

"AN OVERTURE TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REGARDING THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.[2]

"*To the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States, in session at Memphis, Tenn.*, 1896:

"The undersigned desires respectfully to call the attention of the Assembly to the fact that it is now just about two centuries and a half since the Westminster Assembly, which framed our Catechisms and Confession of Faith, was in session.

"He also brings to the attention of the Assembly the fact that several branches of the Presbyterian family are already proposing to celebrate, in various ways, the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of that great event during the coming year.

"He further expresses the conviction that at the present day it is important to give prominence to the history and contents of the great doctrinal symbols which the Westminster Assembly gave to the world. We live in an age of unrest and criticism, if not of transition, in regard to many things pertaining to the Christian faith. An intelligent acquaintance with the history of the Westminster Assembly, and a clear grasp of the doctrinal system which it formulated, may be of great value in these circumstances.

---

[1] This is the proper official title of that branch of the Presbyterian Church which is often popularly termed the Southern Presbyterian Church, or the Presbyterian Church in the Southern States.

[2] Minutes of the General Assembly for 1896, page 585.

"The undersigned, therefore, respectfully overtures the General Assembly to take steps to observe this anniversary in some suitable way—say, in connection with the Assembly of 1897.

"FRANCIS R. BEATTIE.

"*Louisville Seminary, May* 18, 1896."

At the same time the following resolution was presented to the Assembly at Memphis by one of its members:[1]

"Whereas the twenty-ninth day of April, 1897, will be the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the completed report to the British Parliament of those formularies of faith known as the Westminster Standards, and whereas this Assembly would record its sense of the inestimable blessings which have resulted from the Westminster Confession and Catechisms, not only to the churches holding these Standards, but to the cause of Christianity, therefore,

"*Resolved*, That this Assembly hereby recommends to the Synods and Presbyteries within its bounds the propriety . . . . of commemorating this event in such manner as they deem best.

W. D. MORTON."

These papers were both sent to the Committee of Bills and Overtures of the Assembly, and it presented the following report, which was adopted by the Assembly[2]:

"Your committee recommends that the General Assembly commend to the Presbyteries and Synods the propriety of observing the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the formulation of the Westminster symbols of doctrine, and that order be taken by this Assembly to celebrate this event in connection with the sessions of the General Assembly of 1897. To carry this order into effect, it is recommended that the Assembly appoint an *ad interim* committee to prepare a programme of commemorative exercises, and to select speakers for the occasion.

"CHARLES R. HEMPHILL, *Chairman*."

---

[1] Minutes of the General Assembly for 1896, pages 585, 586.

[2] *Ibid.*, page 586.

Later on in the sessions of the Assembly of 1896 the Moderator, Dr. Mallard, announced the following committee to arrange for the celebration, during the next Assembly, of the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the origin of the Westminster Standards: J. Henry Smith, D. D., Chairman; F. R. Beattie, D. D., W. M. McPheeters, D. D., T. C. Johnston, D. D., W. A. Alexander, D. D., John A. Preston, D. D.[1]

This committee thus appointed proceeded in due time to discharge the duty laid upon it by the Assembly. Under the efficient leadership of its chairman, and by correspondence between the members of the committee, an elaborate series of subjects and a carefully-selected list of speakers were made ready. The result of their labors was the presentation of the following report to the Assembly of 1897, which convened at Charlotte, N. C.:[2]

"REPORT TO THE ASSEMBLY AT CHARLOTTE, N. C., OF THE AD INTERIM COMMITTEE OF THE CELEBRATION OF THE TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

"The last General Assembly appointed an *ad interim* committee to prepare a programme of commemorative exercises, and to select speakers for the celebration during the present Assembly in Charlotte, N. C., of the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the formation of the Westminster symbols of doctrine. This committee consisted of the Rev. J. Henry Smith, D. D., chairman; F. R. Beattie, D. D., W. M. McPheeters, D. D., T. C. Johnston, D. D., W. A. Alexander, D. D., and John A. Preston, D. D. Alas! within a little over three months after this appointment (September 13th) the whole church was called to mourn the death of the last-named member of this committee—a death and a loss that has shrouded in deep and personal sorrow all who knew Brother Preston, especially

[1] Minutes of the General Assembly for 1896, page 618.

[2] *Ibid.*, 1897, pages 8–11.

the Synods of North Carolina and Virginia, and the devoted church, in whose house of worship the Assembly is at present meeting, of which he was the popular and beloved pastor. Your committee, with the sad exception just noted, have been in active correspondence with one another for about four months, and have, with remarkable and most gratifying unanimity and heartiness, agreed upon the following programme of exercises, and upon the selection of speakers, principals and alternates, for this interesting and important occasion. The Assembly will observe that the topics fall under three general heads, viz.:

"1. The civil and religious condition of Britain at the time.

"2. The personnel and work of the Assembly in its Confession, Catechisms, Polity, and Worship.

"3. The relations and influences of these symbols of doctrine to current popular theology and to the Reformed churches generally, and upon individual, family, social, and civil life—making in all eleven addresses.

"I. HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE.

"(1), The Social and Political Condition of Britain at the time, with special reference to those aspects of the times that (*a*), prepared the way for the calling of the Assembly, and (*b*), exerted an influence on it when called. *Principal*—Rev. Henry A. White, D. D., Lexington, Va. *Alternate*—Rev. Robert P. Kerr, D. D., Richmond, Va.

"(2), The Religious Situation of Britain at the time. *Principal*—Rev. Robert Price, D. D., Clarksville, Tenn. *Alternate*—Rev. C. R. Hemphill, D. D., Louisville, Ky.

"(3), Description of the Assembly—its personnel, proceedings, and place of meeting. *Principal*—Rev. T. D. Witherspoon, D. D., Louisville, Ky. *Alternate*—Rev. R. K. Smoot, D. D., Austin, Texas.

"II. EXPOSITORY AND CRITICAL.

"(4), The Doctrinal Contents of the Confession—its fundamental and regulative ideas; and the necessity and value of creeds. *Principal*—Rev. Robert L. Dabney, D. D., Victoria, Texas. *Alternate*—Rev. John S. Watkins, D. D., Spartanburg, S. C.

"(5), Nature, Value, and Special Utility of the Catechisms. *Principal*—Rev. G. B. Strickler, D. D., Hampden-Sidney, Va. *Alternate*—Rev. S. A. King, D. D., Waco, Texas.

"(6), Polity and Worship—emphasizing their relation to doctrine. *Principal*—Rev. B. M. Palmer, D. D., New Orleans, La. *Alternate*—Rev. Eugene Daniel, D. D., Raleigh, N. C.

"III. INFLUENCES, RELATIONS, ETC., ETC.

"(7), The Churches that hold the Westminster Symbols, and the Reformed Churches generally—their points of contact and contrast; their present relations, work, and outlook. *Principal*—Rev. J. D. Tadlock, D. D., Columbia, S. C. *Alternate*—Rev. J. W. Walden, D. D., Athens, Ga.

"(8) The Westminster Symbols in their Relation to and Influence upon the Missionary Character and Activities of the Church. *Principal*—Rev. Moses D. Hoge, D. D., Richmond, Va. *Alternate*—Rev. W. F. V. Bartlett, D. D., Lexington, Ky.

"(9), The Westminster Symbols Considered in Relation to Current Popular Theology and the Needs of the Future. *Principal*—Rev. Samuel M. Smith, D. D., Columbia, S. C. *Alternate*—Rev. E. H. Barnett, D. D., Atlanta, Ga.

"(10), The Influence exerted by the Westminster Symbols upon the Individual, the Family and Society. *Principal*—Rev. J. F. Cannon, D. D., St. Louis, Mo. *Alternate*—Rev. A. R. Cocke, D. D., Waynesboro, Va.

"(11), The Influence of the Westminster System of Doctrine, Worship and Polity on Civil Liberty and Responsible Government. *Principal*—Hon. W. M. Cox, Baldwyn, Miss. *Alternate*—Judge J. Q. Ward, Paris, Ky.

"Your committee is pleased to report that all the principals except one have signified their grateful willingness to undertake the service assigned them. Dr. Palmer, however, by reason of physical inability, has transferred the service appointed him to his alternate, which, we are happy and glad to say, Dr. Daniel has accepted.

"(1), Your committee earnestly recommend to the Assembly to set apart and appropriate six evenings during the sessions of this Assembly to hear these addresses.

"(2), We respectfully recommend that the Moderator of this Assembly preside on these evenings, announce the topics, and introduce the speakers.

"(3), We further recommend that the Assembly order that the travelling expenses of such appointees as may not be commissioners from their Presbyteries be paid out of the incidental

fund of the Assembly, inasmuch as they are called by the Assembly itself, through its *ad interim* committee, to come and address it on a designated subject.

"Your committee, aware of Dr. Dabney's blindness, and hearing that Dr. Palmer was threatened with the same, and anxious to have the able help of both these beloved brethren in this interesting anniversary, passed a special and unanimous vote that if either of these brethren found himself unable to be present at this meeting, and would send his paper on the topic assigned him, your committee would promise to endeavor to have it properly read to the Assembly. Whether these addresses or papers shall be published in a separate volume, and by whom, it will be for the Assembly itself to decide.

"Sincerely thanking the Assembly that appointed us, for the sacred trust reposed in us, and for the high honor it conveys, we respectfully ask to be discharged.

"J. HENRY SMITH,
"FRANCIS R. BEATTIE,
"W. M. MCPHEETERS,
"T. CARY JOHNSTON,
"W. A. ALEXANDER,
"*The Assembly's Ad Interim Committee.*"

This report was adopted by the Assembly of 1897, and referred to the Committee on Devotional Exercises, of which Rev. R. Z. Johnston, D. D., was chairman. This committee made reports from time to time to the Assembly.[1] These were adopted by the Assembly, and the result was that the addresses were delivered before the Assembly in the following order: Dr. White and Dr. Price were heard on Thursday night, May 20th; Dr. Witherspoon on Friday, the 21st, at noon, and Dr. Dabney at night of the same day; Dr. Daniel on Saturday, May 22d, at noon; Dr. Strickler on Monday, May 24th, at 11 A. M., and Dr. Tadlock at night of the same day; Dr. Hoge on Tuesday, May 25th, at noon; Dr. Smith

[1] Minutes of the General Assembly for 1897, pages 9 and 15.

on Wednesday, May 26th, at noon; Dr. Cannon on Thursday, May 27th, at noon, and the Hon. W. M. Cox on Friday, May 28th, at noon.

The addresses were all of a very high order, and gave great satisfaction, not only to the Assembly, but also to the large and deeply interested audiences which were in attendance from the beginning to the close of the series of addresses. It is only stating a pleasing fact to say that the interest grew and the enthusiasm deepened with each succeeding address, till at the close the impression produced by eleven such addresses was profound and lasting.

The Assembly, by a rising vote, testified its appreciation of these commemorative addresses in the following terms:[1]

"*Resolved*, 1. That the Assembly has listened with intense interest and profound attention to the addresses made at the Westminster celebration observed by this Assembly by Rev. H. A. White, D. D., Rev. Robert Price, D. D., Rev. T. D. Witherspoon, D. D., Rev. R. L. Dabney, D. D., Rev. G. B. Strickler, D. D., Rev. Eugene Daniel, D. D., Rev. J. D. Tadlock, D. D., Rev. M. D. Hoge, D. D., Rev. Samuel M. Smith, D. D., Rev. J. F. Cannon, D. D., and the Hon. W. M. Cox.

"2. That the Assembly expresses its very great gratification with the exceptionally high order of the addresses these brethren have delivered, and it at the same time assures them that they have discharged the responsibilities laid upon them in a manner which elicits our highest praise and merits our deepest gratitude.

"3. That the Assembly tenders to these brethren, by a rising vote, its sincere and formal thanks for the splendid service which they have rendered in making this celebration so successful, and in rendering its results so effective for good, under the blessing of God, to the whole church."

---

[1] Minutes of the General Assembly for 1897, page 46.

The Assembly also resolved to publish the addresses of Dr. Strickler and Dr. Cannon in pamphlet form for general circulation among our people.[1] They will be issued by the Committee of Publication at Richmond, Va., in due season.

The Assembly also directed that the eleven addresses of the Westminster celebration be published in a suitable memorial volume. This direction was in the following terms, from the Committee of Bills and Overtures:

"In answer to the overture from the Lexington Presbytery, asking for the publication of the Westminster addresses, we recommend that—

"1. The Assembly appoint a committee of three to edit and publish the addresses delivered at Charlotte, N. C., and to secure subscriptions for the same.

"2. The Committee of Publication be instructed to issue two editions, one permanently bound, and one cheaply bound in paper.

"3. The thanks of the Assembly be cordially given to the authors of these addresses, and that the manuscripts of these addresses be requested for publication."[2]

The Moderator, Dr. Goetchius, appointed Rev. F. R. Beattie, D. D., Rev. C. R. Hemphill, D. D., and Ruling Elder Henry V. Escott, a committee to coöperate with the Committee of Publication in accordance with the above resolutions of the Assembly.[3] This committee, in conference with the Committee of Publication, at once entered on its duties, securing a large number of advance subscribers, and in due time this volume was issued as the result of its labors.

It is proper to mention the fact that the Moderator of the Assembly, Rev. G. T. Goetchius, D. D., presided on the occasion of the delivery of the first and second ad-

[1] Minutes of the General Assembly for 1897, pages 24 and 34.
[2] *Ibid.*, 1897, page 43. [3] *Ibid.*, 1897, page 44.

dresses; and that, at his request, the following members of the Assembly presided as the subsequent addresses were delivered in order: Rev. F. R. Beattie, D. D., Rev. Robert Price, D. D., Rev. M. D. Hoge, D. D., Rev. R. Q. Mallard, D. D., Rev. S. A. King, D. D., Rev. R. C. Reed, D. D., Rev. J. B. Shearer, D. D., Rev. R. Z. Johnston, D. D., and the Hon. B. R. Wellford.

The closing action of the Assembly touching this Westminster celebration was to present a resolution of thanks to the *ad interim* committee, in terms as follows:[1]

"The thanks of the General Assembly are hereby given to the *ad interim* Committee on the celebration of the Two Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary of the Westminster Standards for their faithful and efficient labors, resulting in so splendid a programme of subjects, and in so wise a selection of speakers, thereby contributing ably to the revival of interest in these noble symbols of faith.

"We hereby express our heartfelt sympathy for our beloved brother, Rev. J. Henry Smith, D. D., of Greensboro, N. C., a member of the committee, in the sickness which prevented his attendance on this meeting of the General Assembly."

Dr. Smith was chairman of the *ad interim* committee, and his zeal and ability did much to give the programme of the celebration its mature form. It was a source of deep regret that he was not present in person to see and rejoice in the grand result of his faithful service.

It is too soon to speak at length of the deep and widespread benefits which may flow from this celebration and others of a similar nature held in various connections throughout our bounds. With God's blessing upon these celebrations, good will surely follow. Larger knowledge of the origin and contents of our Standards will be one result. Greater devotion to the system of

[1] Minutes of the General Assembly for 1897, page 53.

doctrine, polity, and worship which they contain will surely be kindled. And a renewed purpose to spread these great teachings abroad among men will no doubt be formed by many of our people.

It is gratifying to notice that other branches of the Presbyterian family in America and Europe are also entering upon similar celebrations during this year. A revived interest in the doctrines of the Reformed system will be the sure result, and with this will come vigorous spiritual life and quickened religious activity in the conquest of the world for the Lord Jesus Christ.

II. THE HISTORICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE PERIOD OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

In this section a brief preliminary historical outline of the era of which the Westminster Assembly forms the centre will be given. Such an outline may furnish to some readers, at a single glance, a helpful view of the whole period to which, in various ways, reference is made in the addresses which make up the body of this volume. In this brief sketch only the historical framework of the leading names, dates and events can be presented, so that scarcely anything that is wrought out at length in these addresses will be anticipated. The perusal of this section at the outset may make the study of the splendid addresses which follow all the more pleasant and profitable.

The historical period of which the Westminster Assembly of Divines is the central event may be made to cover the period from the accession of James VI. of Scotland to the throne of the United Kingdoms of England and Scotland as James I., in 1603, to the time of the Restoration of the Stuarts, at the close of the Protectorate, in 1660. This makes a period of fifty-seven years, during which

Puritanism had its remarkable career, and of which the ripest results were gathered up by the Westminster Assembly in its splendid symbols. But prior to this period for many years, and especially during the long and brilliant reign of Elizabeth, certain influences were at work, both in England and Scotland, which prepared the way for the movement that culminated in the Westminster Assembly. This may be termed the preparatory period. In England it dates definitely from the year 1534, when, under Henry VIII., the Act of Supremacy was passed. In Scotland it has its real beginning from the year 1560, when Presbyterianism was ratified by law as the religion of the realm, under Knox, in the reign of Mary Queen of Scots. Thus, for fully half a century prior to James I., the movements in both the civil and religious spheres, which shaped themselves definitely in the Puritan struggle, were already at work both in England and Scotland. During this formative period there were four sovereigns in England and two in Scotland. In England Henry VIII., Edward VI., Mary and Elizabeth held the sceptre up to 1603, while in Scotland, from the death of James V., in 1542, Mary ruled till 1567, and then her son, James VI., with a regency during his minority, up to the death of Elizabeth, in 1603, when James VI. of Scotland became James I. of England and Scotland. This is the period prior to what we have called the Westminster Assembly era. With the year 1603 this era really begins, and for forty years the sore struggle went on till the Assembly met, in 1643, and then it continued, in various forms, till the Restoration, in 1660. Though the conflict was chiefly in England, Scotland felt some of its pulsations. In the political sphere it was a conflict between the throne, with its idea of the divine right of kings, and the people, who were

slowly realizing that they, too, had some divine rights. In the realm of religion the conflict was between a complete reformation, such as had been effected in Scotland, and a partial reformation, such as was represented by the Episcopacy of Elizabeth's day. In the state it was absolutism against the rights of the people, and in religion it was prelacy against presbytery. The struggle, which took more than half a century to assume its definite form, was more than another half-century in working out its perplexing problems. In the forum and on the field, in the pulpit and through the press, the inevitable contest was waged, till one Stuart king died on the scaffold; and, later on, the unique Protectorate had to give way for the return of another Stuart king to the throne.

James I. reigned from 1603 to 1625, a period of twenty-two years. Then came the ill-fated Charles I., who was put to death in 1649, after a turbulent rule of twenty-four years. It was during this fateful period that at times the destiny of civil and religious liberty seemed to be hanging in the balance. At length the Assembly at Westminster was convened, and carefully framed those symbols which announce so plainly the abiding principles of evangelical religion, as well as of civil and religious liberty.

During the reign of James I. the representatives of the people in Parliament had little control of public affairs, and for years at a time the king dispensed with the services of Parliament altogether. The result was that civil rights were ignored or destroyed, and religious grievances became more and more intolerable. When James died, in 1625, Puritanism, both as a civil and a religious force, had almost reached its high-water mark.

With the accession of Charles I. to the throne some

had hopes of a better day; but these hopes were soon shattered, and the worst fears of many were speedily realized. Charles soon dissolved Parliament. In 1626 another was called, but soon dissolved, and this operation was repeated with still another in 1629.

Many of the Puritans emigrated to America about 1630, following the Pilgrim Fathers, who had landed in New England ten years before. In 1633 Laud is made Archbishop of Canterbury, and in 1637 he tried to force Episcopacy upon Scotland. In the same year the trial of Hampden for refusing to pay ship-money took place. Various petitions were presented to the king, seeking redress for sore evils in church and state, but all their appeals were in vain. Towards the close of 1640 the Long Parliament met, with Pym leader in the House of Commons. In May, 1641, Strafford, the chief adviser of Charles, was executed. The same year Charles visited Scotland, seeking the support of that kingdom. In 1642 the Royalist and the Parliamentary forces unsheathed the sword, and the contest was transferred from the halls of legislation to the battle-field. In 1643 the Westminster Assembly met, and the struggle still went on in the field, with Oliver Cromwell the leader of the Parliamentary forces. During 1645 the Royalist forces suffered sore defeats, especially at Naseby, and in 1646 Charles gave himself up to the Scottish leaders, and they in turn, in 1647, surrendered him to the Parliament. For nearly two years the dreadful conflict continued, until at length the king was executed January 30, 1649, and England was proclaimed a commonwealth before the close of the same year. From that time till 1653 Parliament sought to hold the reins of power and rule alone, but in that year Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector. Soon after he somewhat rudely dismissed what remained of the

Long Parliament, which had been in existence since 1640, and which continued to have a nominal existence down to 1660, when it was finally dissolved. This Long Parliament must ever be remembered in connection with the Westminster Assembly.

The Protectorate of Oliver Cromwell continued down to 1658, and in some respects it was marked by not a little tyranny, and by frequent disregard of the will of the people. In that year Cromwell died, and his son, Richard, became Lord Protector. He was totally unfit to hold the reins of government, and the people became displeased, so that the way was ere long opened for the return of the monarchy, and the restoration of the Stuart line in the person of Charles II., in 1660. This virtually closed the outward political career of Puritanism, though the great principles represented by it were so wrought into the life of the English people that Britain after the Restoration was greatly different in both church and state from what it was prior to the Long Parliament.

From 1660 and the Restoration on to 1688 and the Revolution, there is a period subsequent to the Westminster Assembly era, when, for a time, much that was really gained during that era seemed to be apparently lost. Charles II. was on the throne from 1660 till his death, in 1685; and James II. followed, but held the sceptre only about three years. Neither of them had rightly learned the great lessons which the period of fifty-seven years, from 1603 to 1660, should have taught those who were to fitly rule the British people, while the people had been taught lessons during that same period which they could never forget or set aside. The result was that the gates were almost as gladly opened for the approach of William of Orange as they had been for Charles II., so that what seemed lost by the Restoration

of 1660 was really recovered by the Revolution of 1688. Thus the dreadful struggle of those dark days, from 1603 to 1660, was crowned with the permanent results which are to be seen in the civil and religious liberty enjoyed by Britain and the United States to the present day. In the heart of that period, so fraught with blessing, stands the Westminster Assembly, and in its celebrated symbols we have promulgated the principles which made triumph sure in the end. The splendid way in which these principles have stood the severest tests for two hundred and fifty years, on two continents, and under different forms of government, is abundant proof of the value of these principles, and a cogent reason why those who have fallen heir to them should be true to their splendid heritage. A birthright so dearly purchased and so valuable shall surely never be sold for a mess of pottage.

A few facts of history regarding the Assembly itself may be of some service in this preliminary sketch.

The Assembly met, in response to the call and appointment of the Long Parliament, on the first day of July, 1643. Most of its sessions were held in the Jerusalem Chamber of the historic Abbey of Westminster. Its first work was an attempt to revise the Thirty-nine Articles. The Assembly continued at this task till the 12th of October, 1643, when the proposed revision of fifteen Articles was completed. The Parliament then gave the Assembly directions to cease its work on the Articles and begin with the Government and Liturgy of the Church. Meantime the Scottish Commissioners arrived on the 15th of September, 1643, and the Solemn League and Covenant was taken on the 25th of September of the same year. In accordance with the direction of Parliament, the Assembly began its work on the Government and

Liturgy of the Church in October. The Assembly seems to have labored on the Form of Church Government and on the Directory for Worship at the same time, during the years 1643 and 1644. The Assembly presented its first report, which was a partial one, to Parliament on the 24th of May, 1644. Other partial reports were made during June, July and November of that year, and the Directory, as a whole, received the approval of Parliament on the 3d of January, 1645, so that this Directory, which was to take the place of the Liturgy, was really the first finished work of the Assembly.

In the meantime the work of the Assembly on the Form of Government was dragging on its weary way through endless debates, for the real battle-ground was here. On the 20th of April, 1644, the first partial report on Church Government was made to Parliament, and on the 8th of November of the same year a further, and probably a completed, report was made.

In February, 1645, the Scottish General Assembly approved both the Directory of Worship and the Form of Government, but did not yet formally adopt them, awaiting the action of the Parliament. After various delays an ordinance substantially adopting the reports of the Assembly passed both Houses of Parliament on the 29th of August, 1648. The Form of Government in this ordinance was essentially of the Presbyterian type.

The Confession of Faith comes to be next considered. On the 20th of August, 1644, the committee for the Confession was appointed, and sub-committees were afterwards formed to aid in this work. Great care was evidently taken with this doctrinal symbol, for reports from the various committees were made from time to time, and these were revised again and again. On the 25th of September, 1646, the first nineteen chapters of the

Confession were reported to the House of Commons, and on the 4th of December of the same year the whole Confession was presented to the House of Commons, and on the 7th of December to the House of Lords. This presentation was made by the Assembly in a body. On the 29th of April, 1647, the Scripture proofs were presented to Parliament, but it was not adopted by that body till the following summer, and then with some important exceptions where the relations of church and state are in question.

As early as December, 1643, the Assembly began work on the Catechisms. On August 1st, 1645, a report was presented by the Catechism Committee to the Assembly, and on the 14th of January, 1647, the Assembly decided to prepare two Catechisms instead of one. The Larger Catechism was completed first. It was presented to the Assembly on the 20th of October, 1647, and on the 22nd of the same month it was laid before both Houses of Parliament. The Scripture proofs were presented on the 14th of April, 1648, and this Catechism was approved by the General Assembly of Scotland on the 20th of July, 1648. The Shorter Catechism was not presented to Parliament till the 25th of November, 1647, and the Scripture proofs were not reported till the 14th of April, 1648. The hands of Palmer, Tuckney and Burgess were prominent in framing the Catechisms.

Soon after this the Assembly ceased its active work in the lines on which it had moved all through these eventful years. It continued to discharge certain ecclesiastical functions, such as granting licenses to ministers, down to about the close of 1652, and it really passed out of existence with the decline of the Long Parliament which had convened it. Its actual term of existence is sometimes given as five years, six months and twenty-

two days, during which time it held at least one thousand one hundred and sixty-three sessions, but it is not easy to say absolutely when it ceased to exist. Towards the close of its sittings its minutes may not have been made with such care as during the early years of its work, and its real work was done before 1649, when Charles I. was executed.

To give a wider view of the relations of the Westminster Assembly to the whole Reformation movement, a few brief statements are set down to complete this historical outline.

About the close of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries several of the great actors who were to play important parts in the drama of the Reformation were born. Luther was born in 1483, Zwingli in 1484, Farel in 1489, Henry VIII. in 1491, Melanchthon in 1497, Knox in 1505, Calvin in 1509, and William the Silent in 1533. Thus Providence was in various lands preparing different men who should in due season be ready for the gigantic task to which they were called.

Then, at nearly the same time, the Reformation movement began in the several countries represented by these historic names just mentioned. In Germany Luther's theses appeared in 1517, and in 1520 he was excommunicated; and the Reform cause in that land was thereby launched on a tempestuous sea. In 1522 Zwingli was beginning to boldly declare the true doctrine of the gospel, and in a few years Switzerland had the true light shining brightly by its lovely lakes amid the mountains. In 1526 Henry VIII., for reasons of a doubtful nature, was in conflict with the Pope; and in 1534 the Act of Supremacy was passed, and the Reformation was nominally planted on English soil. By the year 1550 Calvin was supreme in Geneva, and at that time also the Re-

formed doctrine, largely in its Calvinistic type, had a firm foothold in France and the Netherlands. About the same time, and more or less for a generation or two later, Geneva and Holland exerted much influence on the Reform movement in Britain. Knox spent some time at Geneva, and many English Puritans found an asylum in Holland. About 1560 we find Knox in Scotland preaching the pure gospel, and organizing the Reformation in his native land in a thoroughly scriptural manner in its doctrine, polity and worship. As Knox was completing his work in Scotland, in spite of the opposition of Queen Mary, William the Silent, about 1566, was preparing to cope with the strong arm of Spain in what seemed at first a hopeless struggle, but which turned out in the end to be a glorious triumph. Then in France soon after came, in 1572, that dreadful massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, which at one fell blow robbed that fair land of her best and noblest blood.

In Geneva, in Holland, and in Scotland the Reformation was perhaps made more thorough than in any other land, and it was from these centres that certain influences were brought to bear upon the Reform movement in England for many years prior to the Westminster Assembly. As is well known, there was in Elizabeth's day a strong party in England who wished for a more complete reform in religion than the Episcopacy of that time represented. This party, in her day, and afterwards, in the time of James I. and Charles I., was in constant communication with the thorough-going Reformers in Scotland and on the continent. This indicates the connection of the Westminster Assembly in England with the true Reform life of Scotland and the continent. This is also clearly shown from the ordinance of Parliament calling the Assembly, wherein it is stated that the

Assembly shall seek to bring the church in England into "nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland and the other Reformed churches abroad." Thus it came to pass that this memorable Assembly, whose splendid story is so grandly told in the addresses which make up this volume, gathered up into itself the varied yet kindred streams that flowed from the pure springs which rose among the hills of Scotland, the mountains of Switzerland, and the plains of Holland; and then, in turn, this Assembly, with its venerable symbols, has, in the providence of God, ever since been the unfailing reservoir from which has flowed numberless pure and life-giving streams into lands far and near, to make glad the city of God even to the ends of the earth. That we have one stream from that reservoir still pure, ever purified, flowing through our beloved Zion, should evoke our grateful praise and provoke our earnest zeal to open up other channels, that this stream may refresh the waste places of the earth.

III. THE ORDINANCE CALLING THE ASSEMBLY, AND A LIST OF ITS MEMBERS.

The ordinance issued by Parliament to convene the Westminster Assembly bears date of June 12, 1643, and is as follows:

"*An Ordinance of the Lords and Commons in Parliament for the calling of an Assembly of learned and godly divines, and others, to be consulted with by the Parliament, for the settling of the Government and Liturgy of the Church of England, and for the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the said church from false aspersions and interpretations.*

"Whereas, amongst the infinite blessings of Almighty God upon this nation, none is, or can be, more dear unto us than the purity of our religion; and for that, as yet many things remain,

in the Liturgy, Discipline and Government of the church, which do necessarily require a further and more perfect reformation than hath yet been attained.

"And whereas it hath been declared and resolved by the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, that the present church government, by archbishops, bishops, their chancellors, commissaries, deans and chapters, archdeacons, and other ecclesiastical officers, depending upon the hierarchy, is evil, and justly offensive and burdensome to the kingdom, a great impediment to reformation and growth of religion, and very prejudicial to the state and government of this kingdom; and that therefore they are resolved that the same shall be taken away, and that such a government shall be settled in the church as may be most agreeable to God's Holy Word, and most apt to procure and preserve the peace of the church at home, and nearer agreement with the Church of Scotland and other Reformed Churches abroad.

"And for the better effecting hereof, and for the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the Church of England from all false calumnies and aspersions, it is thought fit and necessary to call an Assembly of learned, godly and judicious divines, to consult and advise of such matters and things, touching the premises, as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the Houses of Parliament, and to give their advice and counsel therein to both or either of the said Houses, when, and as often as, they shall be thereunto required.

"Be it therefore ordained, by the Lords and Commons in this present Parliament assembled, that all and every the persons hereafter in this ordinance named, that is to say,[1] [here follow the names,] and such other persons as shall be nominated and appointed by both Houses of Parliament, or as many of them as shall not be letted by sickness, or other necessary impediment, shall meet and assemble, and are hereby required and enjoined, upon summons signed by the clerks of both Houses of Parliament, left at their several respective dwellings, to meet and assemble at Westminster, in the chapel called King Henry Seventh's Chapel, on the first day of July, in the year of our

[1] In the original ordinance the names of the members of the Assembly are inserted at this point. They are placed at the close in this sketch.

Lord one thousand six hundred and forty-three; and after the first meeting, being at least of the number of forty, shall from time to time sit, and be removed from place to place; and also, that the said Assembly shall be dissolved in such manner as by both Houses of Parliament shall be directed.

"And the said persons, or so many of them as shall be so assembled or sit, shall have power and authority, and are hereby likewise enjoined, from time to time during this present Parliament, or until further order be taken by both the said Houses, to confer and treat among themselves of such matters and things, touching and concerning the Liturgy, Discipline and Government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of same from all false aspersions and misconstructions, as shall be proposed to them by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament, and no other; and to deliver their opinions and advices of or touching the matters aforesaid, as shall be most agreeable to the Word of God, to both or either of the said Houses, from time to time, in such manner and sort as by both or either of the said Houses of Parliament shall be required, and the same not to divulge, by printing, writing, or otherwise, without the consent of both or either House of Parliament.

"And be it further ordained, by the authority aforesaid, that William Twisse, Doctor in Divinity, shall sit in the chair, as prolocutor of the said Assembly; and if he happen to die, or be letted by sickness, or other necessary impediment, then such other person to be appointed in his place as shall be agreed on by both the said Houses of Parliament. And in case any difference of opinion shall happen amongst any of the said persons so assembled, touching any of the matters that shall be proposed to them as aforesaid, that then they shall represent the same, together with the reasons thereof, to both or either the said Houses respectively, to the end such further direction may be given therein as shall be requisite in that behalf.

"And be it further ordained, by the authority aforesaid, that for the charges and expense of the said divines, and every of them, in attending the said service, there shall be allowed unto every of them that shall so attend the sum of four shillings for every day, at the charges of the Commonwealth, at such time and in such manner as by both Houses of Parliament shall be appointed.

"And be it further ordained, that all and every the said divines, so as aforesaid required and enjoined to meet and assemble, shall be freed and acquitted of and from every offence, forfeiture, penalty, loss, or damage, which shall or may arise or grow by reason of any non-residence or absence of them, or any of them, from his or their, or any of their, church, churches, or cures, for or in respect of the said attendance upon the said service, any law or statute of non-residence, or other law or statute enjoining their attendance upon their respective ministries or charges, to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.

"And if any of the persons before named shall happen to die before the Assembly shall be dissolved by order of both Houses of Parliament, then such other person or persons shall be nominated and placed in the room and stead of such person or persons so dying, as by both the said Houses shall be thought fit and agreed upon. And every such person or persons so to be named shall have the like power and authority, freedom and acquittal, to all intents and purposes, and also all such wages and allowances for the said service, during the time of his or their attendance, as to any other of the said persons in this ordinance named is by this ordinance limited and appointed. Provided always, that this ordinance, or anything therein contained, shall not give unto the persons aforesaid, or any of them, nor shall they in this Assembly assume to exercise, any jurisdiction, power, or authority ecclesiastical whatsoever, or any other power than is herein particularly expressed."

This is the full text of the ordinance summoning the Assembly and appointing its work, to which reference is frequently made in the addresses which form the body of this volume. The full list of the members of the Assembly is also added. The original list was one hundred and fifty-one. A number of others were added from time to time to take the place of some who never attended and of others who died. The names of these are also given, so that the whole list may be entirely complete.

FROM THE LORDS.—The Earl of Northumberland, the Earl of Bedford, the Earl of Pembroke and Montgomery, the Earl of Salisbury, the Earl of Holland, the Earl of Manchester, the Vis-

count of Say and Sele, the Viscount Conway, Lord Wharton, and Lord Howard of Eserick.

FROM THE COMMONS.—John Selden, Francis Rouse, Edmund Prideaux, Henry Vane, senior, John Glynn, John White, Bulstrode Whitelocke, Humphry Salloway, Serjeant Wild, Oliver St. John, Benjamin Rudyard, John Pym, John Clotworthy, John Maynard, Henry Vane, junior, William Pierpont, William Wheeler, Thomas Barrington, John Evelyn, and Walter Young.

OF DIVINES.—John Arrosmith, Simeon Ashe, Theophilus Bathurst, Thomas Baylie, Oliver Bowles, William Bridge, Ralph Brownrigg, Richard Buckley, Anthony Burgesse, Cornelius Burges, Jeremy Burroughes, Edmund Calamy, Richard Capell, Joseph Carrill, John Carter, Thomas Carter, William Carter, Thomas Case, Humphrey Chambers, Francis Cheynell, Peter Clerk, Richard Cleyton, Francis Coke, Thomas Coleman, John Conant, Edward Corbet, Robert Crosse, John De La March, Samuel De La Place, Calibute Downing, William Dunning, Edward Ellis, John Erle, Daniel Featley, John Foxcroft, Hannibal Gammon, Thomas Gataker, John Gibbon, George Gibbs, Samuel Gibson, Thomas Goodwin, William Gouge, Stanley Gower, John Green, William Greenhill, John Hacket, Henry Hall, Henry Hammond, John Harris, Robert Harris, Charles Herle, Richard Herrick, Jasper Hickes, Thomas Hill, Samuel Hildersham, Thomas Hodges, Richard Holdsworth, Joshua Hoyle, Henry Hutton, John Jackson, William Lance, John Langley, John Ley, John Lightfoot, Richard Love, William Lyford, Stephen Marshall, William Mew, Thomas Micklethwaite, William Morton, George Morley, Matthew Newcomen, William Nicholson, Henry Nye, Philip Nye, Henry Painter, Herbert Palmer, Christopher Pashley, Edward Peale, Andreas Perne, John Philips, Benjamin Pickering, William Price, Nicholas Prophet, John Pyne, William Raynor, Edward Reynolds, Arthur Sallaway, Robert Sanderson, Henry Scudder, Lazarus Seaman, Obadiah Sedgewick, Sidrach Simpson, Brocket Smith, William Spurstow, Edmund Stanton, Peter Sterry, Matthias Styles, Francis Taylor, Thomas Temple, Thomas Thoroughgood, Christopher Tisdale, Henry Tozer, Anthony Tuckney, William Twisse, James Ussher, Thomas Valentine, Richard Vines, George Walker, Samuel Ward, James Weldy, Thomas Westfield, Francis Whidden, John Whincop, Jeremiah Whitaker, John White, Henry Wilkinson, senior, Henry Wilkinson, junior, Thomas Wilson, Thomas Wincop, and Thomas Young.

The clerks of the Assembly were Henry Roborough, Adoniram Byfield, and their assistant was John Wallis.

THE SCOTTISH COMMISSIONERS.—*Ministers:* Alexander Henderson, Robert Douglas, Samuel Rutherford, Robert Baillie, and George Gillespie. *Elders:* The Earl of Cassilis, Johnston of Warriston, and Lord Maitland.

The following members were added during the sittings of the Assembly, to take the place of those who died or never sat:

LORDS.—The Earl of Denbigh, Lord Grey of Warke, the Earl of Bolingbroke, the Earl of Essex, and the Earl of Warwick.

COMMONERS.—Robert Harley, William Massam, William Stroud, Arthur Hazelrig, Robert Reynolds, Zouch Tate, Gilbert Gerard, Robert Pye, and John Cooke.

DIVINES.—Francis Woodcock, John Maynard, Thomas Clendon, Daniel Cawdrey, John Dury, William Rathbone, John Strickland, William Good, John Bond, Humphry Hardwick, John Ward, Edward Corbet, Philip Delmé, Thomas Ford, Richard Byfield, William Strong, Robert Johnston, and Samuel Boulton.

SCOTTISH COMMISSIONERS.—Robert Meldrum, the Earl of Loudon, Charles Erskine, Lord Balmerino, the Marquis of Argyll, and George Winrham.

IV. A BRIEF BIBLIOGRAPHY.

In this section a brief account of some of the more accessible literature which pertains to the Westminster Assembly and the work which it did is given. No analysis or criticism of this literature is attempted, but only an enumeration of those books which may enable the reader to pursue his studies at length upon this subject is made. For the sake of orderly statement, the literature in question is arranged in several classes, but in no case is the enumeration exhaustive or complete.

1. For the *secular* history of the era of the Westminster Assembly only a few books require to be named, as any

reliable history of England and of Scotland will suffice to give the framework of the secular or political history of the time. Froude's *History of England* is perhaps about as good as any. Green's *History of the English People* is quite complete, and generally reliable, if not always sympathetic. Hallam's *Constitutional History of England* is of value at several points. For Scotland, Burton's *History of Scotland* is one of the very best of the older treatises. Gardiner's *History of England* is very voluminous and complete, and Clarendon's *Works* are the most elaborate of all. Then the *Life of Oliver Cromwell*, by Thomas Carlyle, though it has the flavor of hero-worship about it, should be read, as also the biographies of any of the chief leaders in the great Puritan struggle, such as Hampden, Pym, Milton, and others.

2. For the *ecclesiastical and religious history* of this great period, any good treatise on *Church History* may be read with profit, though it is a remarkable fact that very few of the German writers on church history do justice to this period in Britain, and some of them are all but silent about it. Kurtz, usually accurate, and Geisseler, generally comprehensive, have really nothing to say about the Westminster Assembly. The consequence is that we have to rely largely on English authors for information upon this subject.

Fisher's *History of the Christian Church* and Schaff's *Church History* are the most recent treatises on the whole subject of church history. Both are readable and instructive, though neither can be said to be entirely sympathetic narratives of the proceedings of the Assembly. In D'Aubigné's *History of the Reformation* the connection between the Reform movement in Britain and on the continent is brought out, although the references to the period of the Westminster Assembly are rather meagre.

Of the older works, Burnet's *History of the Reformation* is one of the most elaborate. Calderwood's *History of the Church of Scotland* and Wodrow's *Correspondence* are the great works on that branch of the subject. As works of a more special nature, a few may be named. Perry's *History of the Church of England* deals with the matters in question from the Episcopal point of view. Hetherington's *History of Scotland* is perhaps still the best single book on this aspect of the subject. A very complete work is Stoughton's *Ecclesiastical History of England.* For the Puritans, Neal's *History of the Puritans* and Marsden's *Early and Late Puritans* are worthy of a prominent place.

Various biographies of the leading men of the time, especially of prominent members of the Assembly, may be consulted with advantage. For Knox, McCrie's *Life of Knox* is good, as also his *Life of Melville.* Strype's *Life of Parker* and his *Life of Grindal* are instructive. Brook's *Lives of the Puritans* is a good single treatise to give some information about most of the leading Puritans. Stowell's *History of the Puritans in England* is also worthy of mention. In Bacon's *The Genesis of the New England Churches* there is a good account of the transplanting of Puritanism from Old to New England. John Fiske, in recent writings, is informing.

3. For *the History of the Assembly itself*, only a tithe of the abundant literature which lies before us at this point of view can be named here. First of all, Stanley's *Memorials of Westminster Abbey* should be perused, to give a vivid impression of the memorable place where the Assembly met. For the proceedings of the Assembly, *The Minutes of the Sessions of the Westminster Assembly of Divines*, edited by Mitchell and Struthers, is of the utmost value. The official manuscript record of the As-

sembly was discovered a little over twenty years ago in Dr. Williams' library, in London, England, and has been of great value. Lightfoot's *Works*, and especially his *Journal of the Proceedings of the Assembly of Divines*, are full of information. Gillespie's *Notes of the Debates and Proceedings of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster* should be set beside Lightfoot, as they represent two types of view. Of great value on the national side are *The Journals of the House of Lords and of the House of Commons* during the period when the Assembly was in session. For many details found nowhere else, we must go to Baillie's *Letters and Journals*, where many quaint and shrewd observations are found. In Fuller's *Works*, in Whitlocke's *Works*, and in Rushworth's *Works*, the reader who has an abundance of leisure can find much of primary value.

Some of the most recent books on the Assembly and its work are now to be named. Hetherington's *History of the Westminster Assembly*, edited by Williamson, is brief and accurate; and Mitchell's *Westminster Assembly: Its History and Standards*, is perhaps the best single popular book on the Assembly yet published. It is *The Baird Lecture* for 1882, and is of real interest and value. In addition to these we may mention Reid's *Memoirs of the Westminster Assembly*, Briggs' *Documentary History of the Westminster Assembly*, in *Presbyterian Review* for 1880, and Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Volume I.

4. Touching *the exposition of the doctrinal contents* of the Westminster Standards, only a few suggestions may be made. Passing by the great treatises on theology which represent the system of doctrine and polity taught in these Standards, some books, which deal directly with them in an expository way, are here set down, with very brief descriptions when deemed useful. Schaff's *Creeds*

of Christendom is very complete and informing in Volume III., though the exposition made is not always in hearty sympathy with the definite system set forth in the Standards. Shedd's *History of Doctrine*, though too brief to satisfy, is worth consulting for its indirect references. Mitchell's work, already mentioned, on *The Westminster Assembly*, in its closing chapters, has a good exposition of the doctrinal contents of the Standards. A. A. Hodge's *Commentary on the Confession of Faith* is of very great value, and is as good as any treatise on the Confession alone. It is simple and sympathetic. Somewhat similar *Expositions of the Confession* at the hands of Dickson, of Shaw, and of Mitchell, are worthy of mention. On the Catechisms, especially the Shorter, there is a small library of literature. The authors we may mention are Vincent, Watson, Flavel, Willison, Brown, Fisher, Steele, Mair, Green, Hodge, all of whom have done good service on the Catechisms. Beattie's *The Presbyterian Standards* binds together and seeks to blend into one complete exposition the contents of the Confession and both Catechisms. For an exposition of the Larger Catechism alone, Ridgeley's *Body of Divinity* is deserving of notice, when so few treatises deal directly with the Larger Catechism.

To call attention to literature which is in danger of being neglected, we mention a few works which deal with the *polity, discipline and worship* of the church in their relation to the Westminster Assembly, which was convened to deal with these matters as much if not more than with the subject of doctrine.

A few of the rare old treatises which were produced in the Westminster era are named first: Gillespie's *Aaron's Rod Blossoming* is perhaps the ablest plea for Presbytery ever made. Rutherford's *A Peaceable Plea for Paul's*

Presbytery is valuable also. Baillie's *A Dissuasive from the Errors of the Times* is a curious old work. Byfield's *Grand Debate between Presbytery and Independency* gives a vivid sketch of the Assembly debate on this question. Baxter's *Five Disputations of Church Government and Worship* is a capital old work. King's *Inquiry into the Constitution, Discipline, Unity and Worship of the Primitive Church* is another very elaborate product of this period. Anderson's *A Defence of the Church Government, Faith, Worship and Spirit of the Presbyterians* was published a generation or two after the Westminster era, and has much merit.

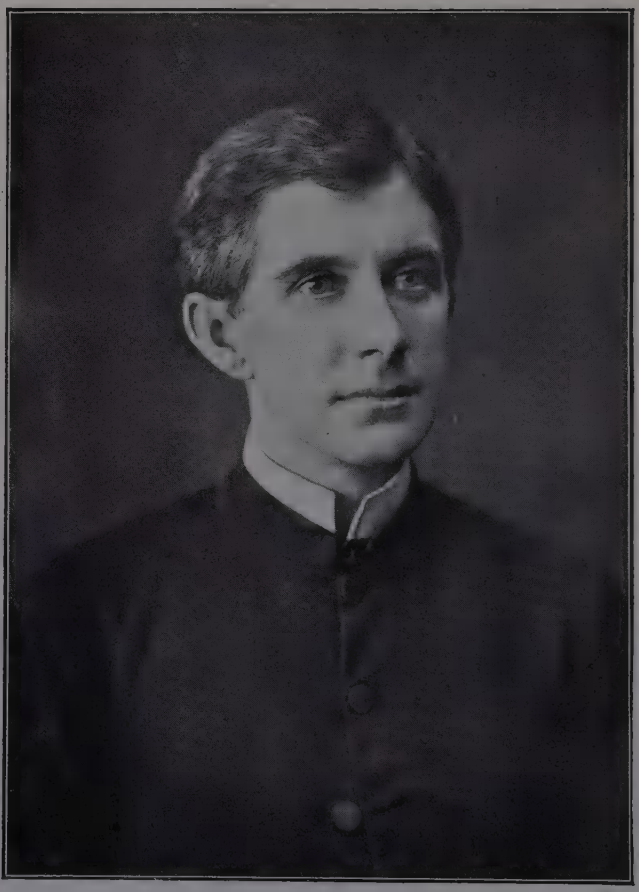
Of more recent works the following may be noted: Brown's *Constitution, Government and Discipline of the Christian Church* is comprehensive. Miller's *Presbyterianism* and other works are of much value for plain readers. Smyth's *Presbytery, not Prelacy, the Scriptural and Primitive Polity* is valuable for the literature which it brings before the reader. In both Hetherington's and Mitchell's works, already named in another connection, there is much on this topic also. Bannerman's *The Christian Church* is an able recent treatise on the Presbyterian side. Hodge's *Discussions in Church Polity* is of permanent value. Peck's *Ecclesiology* and Girardeau's *Instrumental Music in the Christian Church* have special value on their respective topics. It must be added that in Thornwell's *Collected Writings* there is much of lasting importance, and that the same may be said of Dabney's *Discussions*, recently published. Johnson's *History of the Southern Presbyterian Church* ought to be named here also.

Useful articles on polity, discipline and worship, from the Presbyterian point of view, may be found in the various volumes of the *Proceedings* of the Councils of the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System.

5. Touching the *influences* of the Westminster Assembly, only a few suggestions as to literature can be made, for to set down everything here would be to catalogue the literature of the history of Puritanism and Presbyterianism on two continents, and to give an account of that struggle for the civil and religious liberty which we now enjoy. For Scotland, Buchanan's *Ten Years' Conflict* brings out the working of the principles laid down by the Westminster Assembly in the Disruption struggle. McCrie's *Annals of English Presbytery* tells the story for England. For America, Hill's *American Presbyterianism*, Hodge's *Constitutional History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Gillett's *History of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, and Briggs' *American Presbyterianism*, will suffice for the United States, while Gregg's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada* is the complete work for the Dominion.

For the Puritan stream of influence, in addition to books already named in other connections, Edwin Hall's *The Puritans and their Principles* may be mentioned as one of many books which might be noted here.

For the influence of the principles of the Westminster Assembly on civil liberty, many books might be named, but we can only refer in a general way to those books which treat of the long struggle for constitutional government in Britain and on the continent of Europe, and to those numerous treatises which deal with the American Revolution; for in all of these the legitimate outcome of these principles is to be seen.



REV. HENRY A. WHITE, M. A., PH. D., D. D.

I.

THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF BRITAIN AT THE TIME OF THE CALLING OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THOSE ASPECTS OF THE TIMES THAT (*a*), PREPARED THE WAY FOR THE CALLING OF THE ASSEMBLY, AND (*b*), EXERTED AN INFLUENCE ON IT WHEN CALLED.

BY

Rev. HENRY A. WHITE, M. A., Ph. D., D. D.,

PROFESSOR IN WASHINGTON AND LEE UNIVERSITY,

LEXINGTON, VIRGINIA.

ANALYSIS.

The situation in 1643.—In Virginia.—In Massachusetts.—In Europe.—Assembly convened.—Scotch Commissioners.—Assembly's task.—Directory of Worship reported.—Confession framed.—Catechisms made.—Charles I. executed.—The Standards the product of a great movement.—Homer referred to.—Social and political life of Britain reviewed.—England in 1543.—Henry VIII.—Germany.—Luther.—Calvin.—Scotland.—Wishart.—Thomas Cromwell.—Coverdale's Bible.—New Anglican church.—Cranmer.—Romanism checked.—Mary.—Philip of Spain.—Sore persecutions.—Martyrs' blood the church's seed.—Elizabeth.—England awakes.—Social advance.—Holland and France.—Knox.—Protestant sentiment.—Parliament active.—Pope interferes in vain.—Mary Stuart.—The Armada.—Popery described.—Its rise.—Its nature.—Political Rome because papal Rome.—The scarlet woman.—Church of England in 1570.—Vestments.—Marian exiles return.—Debate arises.—Puritans appear.—Elizabeth's attitude.—Council of Trent.—Jesuits.—Puritans largely Presbyterians.—Hooker and Bancroft.—Calvinism and James I.—A crisis.—James a bigot and a tyrant.—Hated Presbytery.—Puritans petition James.—The king haughty.—Great conflict.—Puritans *versus* Romanists.—Parliament *versus* king.—Some Puritans fled the country.—Most remained.—Charles I.—Conflict deepens.—Civil and religious.—Arminianism *versus* Calvinism.—The Bible read.—Laud persecuted.—Morals decline.—Spiritual life at stake.—Calvinism to the rescue.—Scotland and Laud.—Jennie Geddes. Presbytery restored in Scotland.—King and Parliament.—Long Parliament.—Pym.—Laud in prison.—Strafford executed.—Charles checked.—Grievances.—War begins.—Army of the Commons under Essex.—Westminster Assembly summoned in 1643.—Thirty-nine Articles revised.—Cromwell.—Pym and Scotland.—Solemn League and Covenant.—The Scotch army.—Assembly's work.—English Presbyterianism leads.—English and Scottish Puritanism differ.—Commons largely Presbyterian.—Polity.—Standards the product of English theology and Scottish faith.—Several parties in Assembly.—Debates.—Cromwell gave Independents force.—Presbyterianism never had firm foothold in England.—Religious toleration.—Presbytery broke the power of absolutism.—Presbyterian churches in America the heirs of this victory.—Scotch-Irish and American Presbyterians made the work complete.—Exhortation to loyalty and devotion.

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

I.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITION OF BRITAIN AT THE TIME OF THE CALLING OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

THE Westminster Assembly of Divines was convened in the Westminster Abbey, London, in the year 1643. On our side of the Atlantic it was the era of colony-planting, when none but members of the Episcopal Church were permitted to dwell in the Tide-water region of Virginia, and when none but members of the Congregational Church could vote and hold office in Massachusetts. On the farther side of the Atlantic, the year 1643 marked the central period in the long struggle for conscience and for freedom, when the princes of the earth were taking counsel together to establish the doctrines of religion through the agency of the sword, when Romanists and Protestants on the continent were engaged in the tragedy of the Thirty Years' War, when the infant Louis XIV. was just ascending the most powerful throne in Europe, when Calvinists and Arminians were holding fierce debate in Holland, when John Milton was waging battle for the liberty of the press, when Richard Baxter was learning how to preach and how to pray, and Oliver Cromwell was acquiring the art

of cavalry leadership in the field of war against King Charles I.

The booming of guns was borne to London on nearly every breeze from the north and west during the summer of 1643. Saturday, the first day of July in that year, saw a vast throng assembled in the Abbey church, Westminster. In obedience to the call of England's body of law-makers the city on the Thames sent devout men and women to crowd the house of worship. Dr. William Twisse, the Puritan minister from the town of Newbury, occupied the pulpit. Ten members of the House of Lords, twenty members of the House of Commons, and sixty-nine ministers of the gospel from all England, sat in the congregation to hear the elaborate discourse from the text, John xiv. 18: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you." After service the ministers and members of Parliament betook themselves to Henry VII.'s Chapel and there gave answer to their names as the clerk called the official roll of the Westminster Assembly.

Among the clergy of that Assembly were a few Huguenots; all the rest had received Episcopal ordination in England. One bishop in full canonical dress held a seat. Nearly all were clad in the plain, simple garb of Puritan ministers. On July 8, the entire Assembly took the oath of office as a governmental commission under the authority of the English Parliament, charged with the business of revising and amending the Thirty-nine Articles, the constitution of the Church of England. Under our form of government the Assembly might be termed a constitutional convention, called to consider ecclesiastical law.

September 15 marked the reception of commissioners from Scotland as corresponding members. Ten days

later the Assembly and the Parliament gave pledge to keep the Solemn League and Covenant with Scotland, and thus the two kingdoms were bound together by formal treaty to wage war against King Charles I.

Not the revision of the old church constitution, but the construction of a new governmental basis for the church in England, Scotland and Ireland, was the work now laid upon the Assembly by the Parliament. The law-makers resolved to root out Episcopacy and to plant Presbyterianism in the realm. The Episcopal members shook from their feet the dust of Henry VII.'s Chapel, and journeyed homeward. Additional Puritan members came to assist in the work of revolution. The entire Assembly took up its abode in the Jerusalem Chamber, and there, in the presence of the sacred tapestry, they prepared those standards in church government and doctrine which form the constitution of the Presbyterian system of churches throughout the earth.

One year of labor and of fierce debate resulted in the formulation of the new frame of church government and the new order of religious service. On January 4, 1645, the House of Commons passed sentence of death on William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and gave sanction to the Assembly's Directory of Worship. Thus "the archbishop and the old service-book died together."

Before the bar of the House of Commons on April 29, 1647, the Assembly presented those articles of belief and doctrine, with Scripture-texts annexed, which we revere as the Westminster Confession of Faith. The close of the year 1648 saw the Assembly's active work completed with the Shorter and Larger Catechisms. The Long Parliament gave official sanction to the entire series of ecclesiastical symbols elaborated by the Westminster Assembly, and immediately afterwards, in January,

1649, this same Parliament sent King Charles I. to die on the scaffold. The Presbyterian system of doctrine and polity became the basis of the established religion of England at the moment when the old theory of the divine right of kings was virtually overthrown. In the Westminster Assembly we may behold Calvinism putting on the whole armor of God, likewise taking the shield of faith and the sword of the Spirit, and going forth unto the final battle against the Church of Rome. The Westminster Standards, constituting the complete charter of the freedom of the individual conscience, thus embody the primary principles of that mighty ecclesiastical and political movement of the seventeenth century that gave both religious and civil liberty to the people of the kingdom of England.

When the Greek poet, Homer, wishes to portray the beauty and the mechanism of a certain famous warrior's shield, he invites the reader into the fabled workshop to see the crude metals under the measured beating of hammers gradually forged into shape. In like manner let us seek to lay bare the heart of the English people in the days of the Tudors and of the Stuarts. Let us watch the operation of those national forces that were casting in the mould of Protestantism the social and political life of England and Scotland. Let us examine the form and spirit of the national organism during the century preceding the Westminster Assembly, if, perchance, we may discern

> "What anvils rang, what hammers beat,
> In what a forge, and what a heat,"

were shaped the war shields of our hope.

When we turn our steps backward in time through a period of one hundred years, we may look upon the

England of 1543. The Anglo-Saxon realm is attempting the beginner's part upon the stage of European politics. Under the leadership of King Henry VIII. England is entangling herself in the masquerade of mingled bluster and treachery on the continent where Spain and France are the leading actors. King Henry, second monarch of the House of Tudor, uniting in his own person the royal dignity of the ancient rival lines of York and Lancaster, has worn for more than twenty years the title, accorded him by the Pope, of (*Fidei Defensor*) Defender of the Faith. The king bears well the weight of his two-and-fifty years, and seems untroubled by the memory of two wives executed upon the scaffold, for, with only four years of life yet remaining, he is seeking his sixth royal consort. King Henry is no longer the defender of the Pope's ancient dignity. During a period of ten years England has been in a state of revolt against the political authority of the papacy, and the monarch of the realm is the legal head of the Church of England.

In this same year, 1543, we may look across the channel into Germany to behold the hero who bearded the papal lion in his den at Wittenberg and at Worms. Martin Luther has three years of life yet left for breathing his own warlike spirit into the growing Protestant party on the continent. Only four and twenty years have passed away since the public Disputation of Leipsic,[1] wherein he made the earliest avowal of the conviction that the church can exist without a pope. Since 1520 the German people have been reading his declarations that the priest is only a ministerial officer, and that the consecration by bishops might be dispensed with[2]; that without faith the sacraments are useless,[3] and that it

[1] July, 1519. [2] Address to the German nobility.
[3] The Babylonian Captivity of the Church.

is foolish presumption "to seek justification through works."[1] Since 1530 the Lutheran theology has been set forth in the Augsburg Confession, prepared by Melanchthon: a time still later, 1537, is marked by Luther's Smalcald Articles, signed by the Protestant princes of Germany, who take oath, under Luther's direction, to draw the sword against their emperor, if needs be, in the defence of their religious creed. The last days of the reformer are filled with exhortations addressed to his followers to stand firm and keep the faith in the battle that draweth nigh.

In 1543 we may see John Calvin exalted to the seat of chief law-giver in the Christian commonwealth of Geneva. Calvin has just attained the age of thirty-four, and even already during the previous seven years his *Institutes of the Christian Religion* have been leavening the religious thought of Switzerland, Holland and France with the great principle of the absolute sovereignty of God.

When we turn northward in this same year we observe the superstition of Romanism still hovering like a dark cloud over the land of the Scots. Loyalty to the papacy has led King James V. and his nobles, in the previous year, to make war against Henry of England, only to suffer disaster in the battle at Solway Moss. And now King James V. is dead and the blood of the French Guises, in the person of the infant Mary Stuart, holds the title to the throne of Scotland. But the darkness of the hour is made bright by the flames of a beacon-light of glory. George Wishart, Scotland's second Protestant martyr, is yielding up his life at St. Andrews at the stake, unto which Beaton, the Romish cardinal, has ordered him to be bound. Wishart's death is not in vain, for his teachings against the authority of the

[1] Christian Liberty.

Church of Rome have found a seed-bed in the mind of John Knox.

Ten years of Thomas Cromwell's policy of exalting the royal authority in England has set the realm adrift from its papal moorings. Any man who denies that the king is the supreme head of the Church of England is liable to a traitor's death. In theory this church is still in harmony with the Romish congregations on the continent. She maintains practically every point of Romish doctrine, uses the Latin service-book and governs ecclesiastical affairs through the agency of archbishops and bishops. But King Henry VIII. has taken steps that will lead ere long to changes in doctrine. He has appropriated the papal revenues, has assumed the right to appoint church officials, and has made booty of the lands and treasures of the English monasteries. Beyond all these revolutionary acts, the king has given to his people the Word of God translated into their native form of speech. In 1536, Henry and Cromwell authorized the circulation of Coverdale's edition of the Bible in English. At noonday in each parish church in this year, 1543, we may, perhaps, behold a group of peasants gathered about the pulpit where the open Bible rests. Perchance the father reads the sacred pages to his listening family, and then all betake themselves to the field, there to labor and to meditate upon the inspired message. The ploughman carries a portion of the printed word in his bosom, and at the end of the furrow pauses to drop into the memory some of the words that will eventually bear fruit in the great spiritual and ecclesiastical revolution among the masses of the English people. When we pass to the England of King Edward VI., we see a beautiful edifice, the new Anglican church, springing out of the heart of the nation to the sound of the sweetest music known to

mortal ears, the chanting of spiritual psalms and hymns in the English tongue. Archbishop Cranmer has organized the Church of England upon the basis of the Episcopal form of government, but he composes a new prayer-book in the English language, and has arranged a doctrinal system of Forty-two Articles of belief drawn from the Augsburg Confession, with the adoption of the Calvinistic teaching concerning the Lord's supper. Throughout the kingdom there is continued smashing of images and of painted glass in the churches. Romish doctrines have received a staggering blow.

In the pathway of the reform movement stands the daughter of Henry VIII. and of his first wife, Catherine of Arragon. Queen Mary yields her hand in marriage to that dark-browed son of Spain, King Philip, and hastens to deluge her realm with the blood of Protestant martyrs. She entertains at her royal court an agent of the Pope, and commands the celebration of the Romish mass throughout the kingdom. Those who disobey the mandate are forced into exile, into prison, or to the stake. John Rogers dies in the flames at Smithfield in the presence of his wife and babes. Bishop Hooper is chained to the stake at Gloucester, and Rowland Taylor perishes in like manner at Suffolk. Bishops Ridley and Latimer are burnt at Oxford. "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man," cries Latimer when the fire is kindled at his feet. "We shall this day light such a candle, by God's grace, in England, as I trust shall never be put out." Archbishop Cranmer himself, after six recantations written all in vain, is led out to die. He regains a firmer mind when death is imminent and revokes his recantations. As the flames leap up around him, Cranmer holds his right hand steadily in the midst of them, saying, "This hand hath offended."

The despotism of Bloody Mary was without avail. The blood of the martyrs became the seed of a stronger Protestant church. The heart of the nation was aroused to deliver battle even unto the death against the arch-tyrant in Rome. To-day we claim a share in the halo of glory that encircles the brow of each individual in the noble army of martyrs of Mary's reign. They died in behalf of English liberty as threatened by papal tyranny; they died in defence of the Lutheran-Calvinistic system of doctrine; they died for the right to worship God in that form of speech that is native to Anglo-Saxon lips.

A new England is spread before us as we enter the realm of Queen Elizabeth. From 1558 to 1603 she directs the destiny of the growing commercial empire that still continues to dominate the modern world. It is the era when Spenser, Ben Jonson, and Shakespeare hold sway in the realm of literature. The spirit of modern progress manifests great vigor. The sails of the English traders begin to whiten every sea. It is the epoch when explorers flourish; when Walter Raleigh sends expeditions in search of colonial homes, and when Elizabeth's gallant sea-dogs, under the leadership of Francis Drake, singe the beard of the King of Spain, and drive his vessels from the great waters. It is the age of growing science and of great inventions. It is only in Elizabeth's time that men discover the phenomenal facts that light may be introduced into a house through window-glass; that a chimney will lead smoke to the top of a building; that a mattress, laid upon a wooden framework, offers a more comfortable resting-place than a straw pallet; that a feather pillow gives a more gentle support to the head than a log of wood; and that pewter plates and tin spoons are of greater utility and beauty than utensils manufactured from wood.

This epoch witnesses a wonderful development in national sentiment among the people of England. Across the channel they can see the heroism of the people of Holland, who are organizing the Dutch Republic in the face of Spanish oppression. The Huguenots of France, in 1572, pour out their blood in the massacre of St. Bartholomew. John Knox bears the teachings of Calvin from Geneva to Scotland, and the Presbyterian system is there lifting up its head against Mary Stuart and Romanism. All around the horizon the Protestants are in the thickest fury of the battle, and their call is heard in England. Her people have made good use of the preceding thirty years, and the new generation is familiar with the Bible given them by Coverdale. The strong Protestant sentiment of the majority of her subjects leads Elizabeth to make a complete breach with the Church of Rome. The queen is Lutheran in her personal religious creed. She takes to herself the title of Supreme Governor of the Church, and adopts Cranmer's Prayer-Book as the order for religious services. Parliament removes three articles from the creed of Cranmer's time and reissues the Thirty-nine Articles as the constitution of the Anglican Church.

In the matter of doctrine, as well as in the matter of political authority, England is now in complete revolt from the papacy. Not until this time, the year 1570, does the Pope make use of his most potent agencies to force the rebellious kingdom into submission. He issues a decree assuming to depose Elizabeth from her throne, and begins a series of intrigues and plots to elevate Mary Stuart to the seat of sovereignty in England. But Elizabeth's political prestige is unassailable. She can snap her fingers at the man in Rome because a Calvinistic people stand with drawn sword to support their royal leader. Mary Stuart is sent to the block, the Spanish Armada is scat-

tered and broken upon the crags of the North Sea, and England is pushed forward to a position of strength in the world of European politics by reason of the unconquerable spirit of Anglo-Saxon Calvinism.

While the Pelagianism of Rome thus enters into deadly conflict with the Augustinianism of England and Scotland, let us pause in our narrative to discern the actual political and social character of the papacy. In its origin and in its administration, the papacy was a political despotism, the incarnation of the kingdom of this world. It was the result of a two-fold development whereby the bishop of the city of Rome attained great authority as a temporal sovereign, and at the same time climbed to the position of head of the entire church.

As late as the third century of the Christian era the bishop of Rome had no authority outside of his own diocese. In the fourth century, however, he became patriarch of the territory around Rome. The prestige of Rome was gradually transferred to the bishop of the city, and a religious basis was afterwards invented for his assumed authority. He played the part of champion for all the churches of Western Europe, and these churches gradually began to acknowledge his superior official dignity. The Council of Chalcedon (451 A. D.), in its twenty-eighth canon, accorded high honor to the bishop of Rome because of his residence in the ancient capital of the empire, but ascribed equal honor to the bishop of Constantinople because he dwelt in the city of the emperor. Leo, bishop of Rome, made protest against this canon, and claimed for himself the place of highest honor in the church because he was the alleged successor of St. Peter, whom he called the first of the apostles. Leo based his entire claim of primacy in the church upon the untenable theory that Peter possessed superior autho-

rity over the other apostles, and that he was the founder and first bishop of the church in Rome. In order to give legal basis to this bold assumption, a stupendous series of forged documents were brought forward to sustain the Roman bishop's claim of authority over temporal rulers. Vast territories were given the bishop by the Emperor Charlemagne, and thenceforward, through intrigue and diplomacy, the bishop of the city of Rome, under the title of pope, asserted his supreme authority in the church and finally in the state. The papacy became supreme over all Europe.

In imitation of the Roman empire, the empire of the church was marked off into provinces. Over each one of these was placed an archbishop, with ancient proconsular powers. Each province was divided into dioceses and parishes, and over these were established bishops and priests in supreme authority. In this vast governmental web all the threads were bound fast to Rome, and the great spider in the centre of the network was the Pope. Monasteries filled with armies of monks held vast regions in the name of their master in Rome. The Pope was superior to kings and princes in every country in Europe, and his officials were not subject to the civil laws of any land. Papal agents were ambassadors, privy councillors, and prime ministers at the European courts. Learning and literature were controlled by the Pope's subordinates. The legal title to one-third of the land in Europe was vested in the papacy. From one-half to four-fifths of the public revenue from the various nations went into the papal treasury at Rome. The papal empire had active charge of education, politics, and social affairs and dominated the entire lives of men from the cradle to the grave. The papacy developed a system of theology that was entirely an affair of the head

and not of the soul. In its sacramental theory it virtually claimed divine power for the clergy. The sacrament was supposed to produce its effect *opere operato*, by the mere performance of the clerical act itself, without reference to the individual upon whom the act was wrought. None but the priest could baptize the infant, perform the rite of marriage, administer blessing to the dying, or bury the dead. In most cases the priests and bishops were the sole administrators of estates. All these public and private interests were in the hands of the clergy, and money was demanded for the performance of every ecclesiastical service. Rome was the centre of the political and social life of Europe. At the same time Rome was the centre of all political and spiritual wickedness. Under the papacy the very light that men possessed became darkness.

The guilt of papal Rome! The blackness of the guilt of the line of church officials who claimed to be shepherds, but were only wolves! In Luther's time Rome was in very truth the scarlet woman! Sixtus IV. was pope from 1471 to 1484. Poison and the dagger were his favorite methods of removing opponents. His personal vices are unnamable. Alexander VI. (Roderigo Borgia) held the office from 1492 until 1503. Under his direction church offices were sold at auction; cardinals and bishops were given poison at his table. His son Cæsar was a monster of lust, who indulged in murder as if it were a pastime.

Julius II. held the office of pope from 1503 until 1513. As an Italian prince, he formed alliances with the European powers, and waged war for the purpose of conquering and seizing the territory of his neighbors. Leo X. (1513–21) began the construction of St. Peter's Church in Rome, and in order to secure money for its comple-

tion, sent his priests abroad to sell pardons for sin. The blasphemies of one of the auctioneers aroused Luther. The monstrous iniquities of the papal clergy, the grievous taxation imposed upon the people, and the claim of authority to sell spiritual privileges in heaven, stirred the nations of Europe into a great ecclesiastical and political rebellion against the Church of Rome.

In the kingdom of England in 1570, Elizabeth claims all the authority previously accorded to the pope. The Thirty-nine Articles are chiefly Lutheran in doctrine, and they avow the Calvinistic view of predestination and the Lord's supper. Theological students carry the Prayer-book under one arm and Calvin's *Institutes* under the other. Calvin and Cranmer have joined hands in the organization of the English church with the Episcopal form of government. But bishops stand on the same plane of dignity with presbyters. Ministers from the continental churches with presbyterial ordination are received without further ceremonial into the English churches. English bishops pass over to the continent, and sit as co-presbyters with the Lutheran and Presbyterian ministers. Harmony seems to reign among the English Protestants. War breaks out, however, over the vestments worn by the clergy.

The exiles driven forth by Queen Mary return from the continent to form an ecclesiastical war-party in England. In the cities on the Rhine, where they found refuge, English churches were organized. Fierce debates resounded in these congregations over the forms of church government and the forms of worship. From Strasburg and Zurich in Elizabeth's reign a party returns to support the Anglican ritual. From Geneva and Basel comes a Presbyterian band, and Frankfort sends a flock of Independents (Congregationalists.) The church war opens in

England when these eight hundred exiles return from the Rhine and the Alps. Doctrine and government in Elizabeth's established church give complete satisfaction. But these English Protestants have seen the simplicity in dress and ritual that marks the worship of Lutherans and Calvinists. They have been nearer to Rome, and have seen the danger from the papal forms. "Away," they cry, "away with the square cap, and the lawn sleeves, and the white surplice, and the sign of the cross in baptism." These are denounced as "badges of popery," and the civil magistrates must not enforce their use. These externals merely transform ministers into papal priests. Because of their demand for greater purity and simplicity in the matter of public worship, the restored exiles are termed Puritans. They continue to denounce the Romish priests of Mary's reign, who still officiate in Elizabeth's churches. Behind the surplices and under the caps they see thousands of unworthy and ignorant men, reading to the people the services of the Prayer-book.

These war cries are spoken in an age devoted to formality and display. Elizabeth's reign is filled with pomps and royal processions. Every inch of space on the queen's state dresses is adorned with jewels. Her bespangled robes are draped over vast farthingales, spread out like tables on which her arms may rest. "Her appearance when thus attired has been compared to that of an oriental idol." The extravagances of the rich are imitated by the poor; women whose families are suffering for bread go abroad in velvet clothing. Puritanism begins to demand spirituality in the church. "No more pomp and ceremonialism," they cry. Away with the vestments and the bowing of the knee that recall the degenerate worship of the papal administration!

In 1563 the Council of Trent completes its work of

mild reform, and the papacy establishes itself upon a basis of austere morality. Seven years later, with the papal curse resting upon her, Elizabeth engages in conflict with the Jesuits and with the Puritans. Both of these parties are persecuted. In defence of the Calvinistic creed, Thomas Cartwright, professor of divinity at Cambridge, sets forth the view that the management of church affairs belongs unto the church through her selected representatives. He declares that the rule of bishops is unlawful, and that the only scriptural form of ecclesiastical government is the Presbyterian.[1] The great mass of the Puritans follow Cartwright's leadership. A smaller band adhere to the Congregationalist theory of Browne, publicly advanced in 1588. Hooker utters a call for peace in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*, but Bancroft, afterwards archbishop, lays the foundation of the theory that claims divine right for the Episcopal form of government and for the apostolic succession of bishops. Nevertheless the Presbyterian party gains prestige by upholding the queen in her conflict with Spain and Romanism. The English universities become hot-beds of Calvinism; the new generation of clergymen are nearly all disciples of Geneva, and often ascend the pulpit in the black Geneva gown. Even the higher bishops abstain from bowing at the name of Christ. Stained glass disappears from the windows, and the communion-table stands in the centre of the church. The entire ritual is approaching a Calvinistic simplicity when Elizabeth dies and the throne is claimed by James Stuart of Scotland.

A great crisis was at hand in national affairs when King James I., son of Mary Stuart, journeyed southward to London in 1603. James was awkward and ungainly

[1] The earliest Presbyterian church in England was established on the Thames river, near London, in 1572.

in person, but his mind was more full of sharp angles than his body. He was a canny Scot, shrewd at striking bargains and making compromises. He was possessed of a quick wit, and had some knowledge of theology. He desired to pose as the British Solomon, although Henry IV. of France termed him "the wisest fool in Christendom." He was deficient in common-sense, and was filled with self-conceit. A Calvinistic training superadded to the partial French nature of King James rendered him a bigot in religion and a tyrant in politics. He claimed to be the Lord's anointed vicegerent, commissioned to re-establish the Davidic theocracy in the British realm. He claimed divine right to exercise absolute personal authority in his kingdom. His experience with presbyterial courts in Scotland, moreover, had inspired in the king an intense hatred of the Presbyterian system.

Eight hundred Puritan ministers met the king with a petition for certain reforms in connection with ceremonies and the character of the clergy. They raised no objection to the Episcopal form of church government. They demanded an educated, spiritual ministry, and the abolition of the square cap, white surplice, and the sign of the cross in the ritual. The king heard these complainants in the Hampton Court Conference. He accepted the suggestion of Reynolds and ordered a new translation of the Bible. "No bishop, no king" was the maxim that formed the basis of the policy of James. His bearing was full of arrogance. When a Puritan minister used the word Presbytery, James flew into a passion: "A Scottish Presbytery agreeth as well with a monarchy as God with the devil. Now Jack and Tom and Will and Dick shall meet and at their pleasures censure me and my council . . . let that alone." At

a moment when slight concessions from the king, in accordance with those practically made already by some of the English clergy, would have preserved the unity of his kingdom, this haughty assumption of absolute authority by James brought ruin. "I will have one doctrine," said the king, "one discipline, one religion in substance and ceremony." He burst out in rage against the Puritans, and shouted: "I will make them conform or I will harrie them out of this land, or else worse."

The great religious and political conflict was opened. The landed gentry, the merchants, and the professional men, and a few of the nobility were Puritans, and their stronghold was the House of Commons. They possessed wealth and education. They were filled with unyielding antagonism toward Romanism. When James spoke of Rome as the "mother church," when he sought the hand of a Spanish princess for his son Charles, when he made promises of indulgence to Romanists, the Puritans recalled to memory the Spanish Armada and the Gunpowder Plot. Their spirit as Englishmen was aroused when they beheld toleration granted to Romanists and not to Puritans. The Commons met his royal claims at every point. They refused to vote money for the expenses of his administration. The King outraged national sentiment by contracting marriage for Charles with the Roman Catholic princess of France, Henrietta Maria. As a further unwise act, he ordered the publication of the *Book of Sports*, enjoining games and other festivities after service on the Lord's day.

A few of the Puritans fled to Holland to unite with the Separatists, who were making ready to sail to Massachusetts in the "Mayflower." Most of them remained to offer battle in the House of Commons against the claim of absolute sovereignty on the part of the monarch, who

made use of his alleged divine prerogative to yield the realm of England to Rome and to Spain. He was degrading the morals of the people; he was supporting at his court profligate favorites like Buckingham; he was increasing papal ceremonies in the church, and he was holding friendly conference with Spain, the champion of Romanism, when death came to claim him, in 1625.

The conflict was continued between Charles I. and Parliament over the king's income and the governmental revenue. Charles claimed authority to levy and collect taxes; the Commons asserted that the power of taxation belonged to them as the representatives of the people.

The differences in religion became greater. The Huguenots of France and the Protestants of Denmark were going down before the power of Romanist rulers. King Charles possessed a Romanist wife, and supported Romanist favorites at the court. Arminian doctrine became more prevalent, and Montague, Manwaring, and others of this creed, likewise defended the king's authority and denounced the claims of Parliament. The Arminian clergy began to revive ancient ceremonial forms, and in Durham Cathedral the communion table was permanently located at the east end of the chancel.

Calvinism remained dominant in the Commons and grew in strength among the people. The subjects of King Charles were reading with keen eagerness the version of the Bible issued in 1611. They began to entertain great reverence for the literal word of Holy Scripture. Some of them went to extremes in assuming an external deportment of solemn seriousness. Some upheld a Pharisaic observance of the Sabbath day and gave Bible names to their children. But under occasional excess in the strict observance of the letter of the sacred law there lay

that earnestness of character that constitutes the strength of the Anglo-Saxon race.

The claims of the king seemed to the Puritans in the Commons to open the way for the entrance of the ceremonies and doctrines of the Church of Rome, and they girded themselves for the battle against the royal despotism. They denied that Charles was the supreme ruler of the realm, and declared that they alone were authorized to voice the sentiments of the sovereign people of England.

Charles accepted the gage of battle. He sent Eliot, leader of the Commons, to die in the Tower of London. He used the Court of Star Chamber, composed of his privy councillors and others, as the instrument of personal tyranny. The king's opponents were condemned and punished without fair trial. The year 1633 saw William Laud made Archbishop of Canterbury. Laud secured the republication of the *Book of Sports*, and labored to make Sunday afternoon a time of revelry. He attempted to locate all communion tables in the eastern end of the church. He was a martinet in matters of ritual. He broke up the congregations organized after the continental model. The scourge, the pillory, and the prison were ready for non-conformists. To the Puritans Laud seemed to be leading a retrograde movement that would bring the Church of England again under the power of the Pope. He advocated the doctrine of the apostolic succession of the English bishops. He upheld the divine prerogative of the English king. He erected a crucifix in Lambeth chapel. The communion table was railed off at the east end of the church and called an altar. Laud's clergy began to talk of the invocation of saints. The queen celebrated mass in the royal palace. She entertained there an agent of the Pope. License and de-

bauchery ran riot. Indelicacy and indecency ruled at the court. Lax morality and reckless luxury went hand in hand. The seat of government was the centre of gorgeous ritual and ecclesiastical tyranny under the direction of Laud, to whom the Pope was offering the red hat of a Romish cardinal.

The spiritual life of England was at stake. If the prelates and courtiers were not leading the church toward Rome, then they were assuredly leading the people into settled debauch. From his country home at Horton, John Milton looked forth upon that spectacle of gilded license to declare, in the poem called *Comus*, that the courtesies of the court were "glozing lies"; that gorgeous apparel might cover men who gloried in their shame; that the carnival of sensuality was due to the power of wine and sloth that had come from France and Italy. The creed of the court, said Milton, was this:

> "'Tis only daylight that makes sin."

Honor was there stigmatized as a cheating voice, a juggling art, a vain idol. The breach of one moral law was adduced as an argument for the violation of a second. In Milton's poem the true church is portrayed as a virtuous woman sitting in the palace paralyzed, "in stony fetters, fixt and motionless."

Against this governmental return toward the debauchery of the papal church of the Middle Age, Calvinism, in the English House of Commons, resting upon the authority of the individual conscience, stood ready to decide the issue in the hall of debate and upon the field of battle.

The war in behalf of purity in religion began in Scotland. Laud prepared a new Prayer-book and sent it to Edinburgh for the use of the churches. On July 23,

1637, the priest of St. Giles Church came forth in white surplice to read the new ritual. Jennie Geddes flung her stool at his head, and a riot drove the minister from the chancel. All Scotland arose in arms against Laud's innovations, and in 1638 the National Covenant was signed, binding the Scottish people to labor for the purity and liberty of the gospel. In the same year, at Glasgow, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland deposed the bishops and reëstablished the Presbyterian system. Two brief wars with Scotland were waged by King Charles, but the lack of money compelled him to summon the representatives of the people. The combatants stood face to face in the arena of debate. The issues of religious and of civil liberty were at length to be decided in a conflict between Charles Stuart and the English Parliament.

November 3, 1640, the Long Parliament came together. That Puritan lion, John Pym, was the leader of the House of Commons. Pym labored in behalf of personal liberty for the people upon the basis of the declaration, that "the greatest liberty of our kingdom is religion." He proposed the impeachment of the Earl of Strafford for threatening to lead an Irish Catholic army into England. Archbishop Laud was sent to the Tower and Strafford was sent to the scaffold upon the charge of treason. The tyranny of Charles I. in church and in state was checked, and all of his despotic powers were stripped from him. The Star Chamber and the Court of High Commission, instruments of his absolutism, were abolished. The Commons put the question of religion to the front. They passed an ordinance against Laud's ceremonies and the Sunday sports, and expelled the bishops from the House of Lords. The Grand Remonstrance was then enacted, a restatement of all past grievances against the king, fol-

lowed by a demand for cabinet ministers, and for the reference of church matters to an Assembly of divines nominated by Parliament. Charles appealed to his pedigree as his title to divine authority, and flung his standard to the breeze on August 22, 1642. Unto his standard flocked that party in the Church of England who believed in Laud's ceremonials and in the supreme authority of bishops and archbishops. The House of Commons accepted the gage of battle, and the war began. The political issue between king and Parliament as to the form of civil government was to be fought out by religious parties; Presbyterians and Independents combined against Episcopalians.

Charles and Laud denied that they sought to reëstablish the papacy in England. Their statement was probably true. Nevertheless, they were laboring in the interest of a type of religion as degenerate as that of the Church of Rome. They sought to make the English monarch a virtual pope, supported by a hierarchy of English churchmen. This Anglican model set as low and degrading an example in spiritual and moral matters as that permitted by Romanism. The tyrannical policy of the mediæval popes was surpassed by Charles and Laud when they sought to force their system upon the people by breaking down representative government in Parliament. They attempted to destroy the right to worship, the right to think, and the right of self-government, all at one fell blow.

The Commons sent an army to the field under Essex, and in 1643 summoned the Westminster Assembly to reconstruct the religious system of the kingdom. The first work of the Assembly was the attempt to revise the Thirty-nine Articles. But the battles of 1643 were not favorable to the parliamentary forces. Cromwell was

just learning the art of war in cavalry skirmishes, and Rupert's horsemen were holding the field for Charles. Pym resolved to ask aid from the Scots. Commissioners were sent to Edinburgh, and the treaty was signed, called the Solemn League and Covenant. Five days after the battle of Newbury, September 25, the English Parliament and the Assembly stood with uplifted hands in St. Margaret's Church in London, and took oath to keep the Solemn League and Covenant. Scotland sent an army to fight against the king, and Parliament pledged itself virtually to establish the Presbyterian system in England. The Westminster Assembly at once began the work of bringing the English Established Church into harmony with the reformed churches on the continent, and more particularly into sympathetic touch with the church in Scotland. The English Presbyterians constituted the majority of the great party that was laboring in behalf of constitutional government. They were the revolutionists who led the nation in the battle against the absolute monarchy of James I. and Charles I. Their work gave England the mental preparation for the overthrow of the power of Charles I. in 1649, and for the Revolution of 1688. Their thinkers had developed an English type of Calvinistic theology, but in the Assembly they were ready to accept the views of the commissioners from Scotland who were strict constructionists of the school of Geneva.

The national traditions and modes of thought of the English people committed them to the supremacy of the laity over the local clergy in matters of religion. Very few of the English Puritan leaders accepted the Scottish view of Presbyterianism as a divine institution. The English followers of the religious party organized by Cartwright looked upon the Presbyterian system as an eccle-

siastical form of parliamentary government. The Assembly of divines was called to work under the control of the two Houses, and the clergy in the parishes were to be subject to the direction of the lay elders. The Presbyterian system commended itself to many in England because it rested for ecclesiastical authority not upon the king, but upon the nation itself through its organization by means of elective representatives. This representative system could still further be controlled in accordance with the sentiments of the mass of the people, by holding the ecclesiastical courts themselves in subjection to the great body of civil representatives, the House of Commons.

From the beginning of the reign of the Stuart dynasty the Presbyterian party was dominant in the House of Commons; but in 1641 that House supported the Root and Branch bill for the abolition of episcopacy and for the transference of the authority of the bishops to committees of laymen in each diocese. During the sessions of the Westminster Assembly the Presbyterians in the Commons held to the theory that all ecclesiastical jurisdiction must be based upon the authority of a civil, constitutional government. The real aim of the English Presbyterian party in the Commons was to render both church and king responsible to Parliament. In the Westminster Assembly little debate took place in connection with the formulation of doctrinal propositions. All Puritans alike were opposed to every form of Romish belief; therefore the leaven of Scottish faith was mingled with English Presbyterian theology, and the finished work, the Confession and Catechisms, have come down as the most efficient creed whereby a militant Calvinism may enter into battle in behalf of civil liberty.

With reference to the method and forms of ecclesiasti-

cal jurisdiction, the English Presbyterians, at least in the House of Commons, were less revolutionary than in the matter of doctrine. They manifested a spirit strongly conservative in the sphere of church government. In the Westminster Assembly three parties confronted one another. The Presbyterians were supported by the six Scotch commissioners, Alexander Henderson, George Gillespie, Samuel Rutherford and Robert Baillie, ministers of the gospel, and the laymen, Lord Maitland and Archibald Johnston. The Independents were represented in the Assembly by five ministers, Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, Jeremiah Burroughs, William Bridge, and Sidrach Simpson. These ministers had lived in exile in Holland during the days of Laud's supremacy, and returned to take part in the parliamentary reformation. A third party, called Erastians, was composed of two divines, Thomas Coleman and John Lightfoot, and of many lawyers who sat in the Assembly. Throughout the year 1644 the Independents held the floor of the Assembly in fierce debate over ecclesiastical ordination and discipline. They upheld the extreme democratic view that each separate congregation of believers possesses final ecclesiastical authority in opposition to the Presbyterian system of successive courts, presbyteries, synods and assemblies, with jurisdiction granted to each higher court over the lower body. The Presbyterians outvoted the Independents in the Assembly; but during this same year Cromwell's army of Independents was winning the victory of Marston Moor, and prestige was thereby added to the five Congregationalist brethren. During a portion of the years 1645–'46 the Assembly resounded with the fury of the Erastian controversy. This party advocated the view that the English Parliament is one with the English church, in full accordance with the ancient Jewish theo-

cracy. Selden's argument against the exercise of discipline by church courts was rendered ineffective by Gillespie's knowledge of the Scriptures, and the Assembly established itself in favor of the principle that there is biblical authority for a government exercised by church officers distinct from that of the civil magistrate.

As conservatives the Presbyterians wrought out their views in the Assembly. As conservatives they sought to deal with the king. But Cromwell's Independents won the battle in the field of war against Charles I., and they brought the monarch before the judicial tribunal. The Presbyterians were ready to accept the promise of King Charles that he would establish their ecclesiastical system under his monarchy. The Independents made full adoption of Presbyterian principles concerning representative government as opposed to monarchy. They expelled the Presbyterians from the House of Commons, and sent the king to the block. The Presbyterian system of ecclesiastical government was never widely extended among the English churches; it had to seek acceptance in other lands. Nevertheless, its great revolutionary work in England was completed. Romanism had found a grave in English soil. The old principle of monarchical absolutism in the church and in the state was no more. Forty years later, when the English people saw that the rod of the papacy was indeed broken, and that the necessity no longer existed of joining the church to the state in order that the latter might preserve the existence of Protestantism, then were they ready to adopt, to a certain extent, the principle of religious toleration for all creeds.

In conclusion, let us hear the words of Samuel R. Gardiner, the highest authority on the period of the Puritan revolution, with reference to the movement of

1640–'49: "The Presbyterians had done their work. They had overthrown the monarchy, never, in the sense in which Charles understood the word, to rise again in England." He says further: "The restored kingship of Charles II. was fettered by Parliament in a way which would have been unendurable by Charles I.; and if, ecclesiastically, the church of Sheldon and Morley appeared in very truth the church of Hooker and Laud, there is a sense in which its historical continuity is to be detected in what, in 1646, was known at Westminster as the Reformed Church of England. When bishops ultimately ascended their ancient thrones, they sat on them because they were favored by Parliament rather than because they were favored by the king. The supremacy of lay England in its collective capacity over king and church was, in reality, the main object for which the Presbyterians were contending, and their object and not Charles' object, was obtained with the full co-operation of the party of the Cavaliers, when king and bishops reappeared in 1660 under changed conditions."

Fathers and brethren of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of the United States, I greet you as among the most consistent heirs and defenders of the faith handed down by the Westminster Assembly. That Assembly of Englishmen and Scotchmen girded on its armor and led Calvinism to victory against the hierarchical system that derived its origin from Romanism. Never again can the scarlet woman, nor the divine right of kings and bishops hold their former sway. But the Westminster Assembly itself did not, and perhaps could not, adopt the principle of complete religious liberty. The Scottish settlers in the province of Ulster, Ireland, bore the seeds of that principle to our own Appalachian ridges and foothills. The open Bible, the Westminster

Confession, and the Shorter Catechism taught them the principle of resistance to kings, and they formed the bone and sinew of the revolutionary party that wrought out the independence of the American colonies. Presbyterian principles led to the glorious action of the people of Mecklenburg county, North Carolina, in the year 1775. The Hanover Presbytery played a large part in securing the insertion of the principle of religious liberty in the Virginia Bill of Rights in 1776. In 1785 the same Presbytery forced through the Virginia Assembly Jefferson's bill for the establishment of religious freedom, and thus, for the first time in all history, secured the complete divorce of the church from the state. In the year 1861 our own Southern Assembly committed us to the principle that the sole function of the church is the adjudication of spiritual affairs. May we keep our Zion pure and holy. May her officers be always men of spotless life and uprightness in heart. May our blue banner continue to be the standard of Christ's spiritual kingdom, and beneath its folds may righteousness and truth hold undisputed sovereignty.

REV. ROBERT PRICE, D. D.

II.

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION OF BRITAIN AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THOSE ASPECTS OF THE TIMES THAT (*a*), PREPARED THE WAY FOR THE CALLING OF THE ASSEMBLY; AND (*b*), EXERTED AN INFLUENCE ON IT WHEN CALLED.

BY

Rev. ROBERT PRICE, D. D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE SOUTHWESTERN PRESBYTERIAN UNIVERSITY, CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE.

ANALYSIS.

Two lines of influence led to the Assembly—one was English, the other was Scotch.—Relation of Henry VIII. to the Reformation in England.—Episcopal polity and many Romish practices retained.—Earnest spirits opposed Henry's plans.—Edward VI. favorable to the Reformation.—Mary reversed the policy of Edward.—Elizabeth returned to the position of Henry.—Her sympathy with Rome.—Reasons for her Protestantism.—The origin of Puritanism.—The Marian exiles.—Presbyterian polity favored.—Thomas Cartwright.—Green criticised.—Hooker alluded to.—The first Presbytery.—Presbyterianism prior to the Assembly.—The National Church.—The Brownists.—Elizabeth and the early Presbyterians.—Hooker and the debate between Presbyterianism and Episcopacy.—The principles of the Westminster Standards taking shape.—But within the National Church.—James I., though reared in Scotland, not in sympathy with Presbyterianism.—The Reformation in Scotland.—Unlike that in England.—A conviction of the people.—Patrick Hamilton.—His martyrdom.—Protestantism strong.—Romanism abolished.—John Knox.—First Scottish Assembly.—Church organized as Presbyterian.—Here also the principles of the Westminster Standards appear.—Monarchy and Presbyterianism.—Church establishment.—Presbyterianism opposed to Prelacy and Popery.—Andrew Melville.—General Assembly and the bishops.—Long and bitter conflict with Prelacy.—Prelatic control for a time.—James opposed Presbyterianism.—Persecution and exile.—Sore evils.—Charles I. followed same fatal policy.—His duplicity.—Wentworth and Laud.—The High Commission Court.—The Star Chamber Court.—Many persecuted.—Uniformity forced.—Solemn league and covenant.—Long parliament.—The king and parliament in conflict.—The proposal to call an Assembly.—Called in 1643 to settle religion in the realm.

II.

THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION OF BRITAIN AT THE TIME OF THE MEETING OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

THE religious state of Britain which rendered the calling of the Westminster Assembly necessary and possible, and which determined its character when called, was the result of two distinct lines of influence, the one English and the other Scotch. These moved separately, in the main, until James the Sixth of Scotland ascended the English throne, as James the First, in 1603, when they became united in the production of a common result. To obtain a clear conception of the religious state of Britain at the time of the Westminster Assembly, it will be necessary rapidly to trace the course of these two lines of influence from their origin until the period upon which our interest is concentrated in these exercises.

All the churches of the Protestant Reformation, with the exception of the Church of England, were Augustinian in their theology, and antiprelatical in their polity. Luther's views in regard to the doctrine of the divine decrees, and the relation of sovereign grace to the free will of man, were the same as those of Calvin. This was true also of Melanchthon at the beginning of his career as a reformer, though he afterwards modified his views somewhat. And, when the English Reformation had so far advanced that its evangelical leaders were at

liberty to express their real sentiments, they incorporated the Calvinistic doctrines in their Thirty-nine Articles, where they are still to be found. No other doctrinal sentiments were entertained in the Church of England until the rise of Arminian views in the time of Archbishop Laud. When the Synod of Dort met in Holland in 1618 and condemned the views of Arminius, representatives from the Church of England, appointed by James I., sat and voted with it.

One of the essential features of the Reformation was an uprising against the Romish hierarchy. Consequently, the office of the diocesan bishop was abolished, and the parity of the clergy recognized, in both the Calvinistic and Lutheran Churches, on the continent of Europe. The fundamental principles of Presbyterianism, such as the parity of the ministry, the coöperation of the laity in church government, and the authoritative action of synods, are held by the Lutheran body to this day. The Lutheran Church of Sweden retains the title of bishop, but like the Episcopate of the Methodist Church, the office is not that which claims to be derived from the apostolical succession. In some of the German states, in Holland, in France, and in Scotland, the Presbyterian system in its entirety was adopted. But the Church of England derived its existence from a source in which evangelical truth and order could not be expected to originate. The establishment of the Church of England, in its separation from the papacy, was a purely political movement, or rather a movement prompted by the selfish purpose of a cruel and unprincipled tyrant. After living in wedlock with Catherine of Arragon for twenty years Henry VIII. wearied of her; possibly, as he claimed, his conscience may have troubled him about the legitimacy of his union with his brother's widow. For these

reasons, and the hope of securing a male heir to his throne, together with his passion for Anne Bullen, he determined to put Catherine away. His efforts to obtain a divorce were foiled by the obstinacy or the weakness of the pope, and he resolved to accomplish his purpose by renouncing the authority of the pope and usurping the headship of the Church of England himself.

There were secret sympathizers with the Protestant doctrines in England at that time, such as Cranmer, Latimer and Thomas Cromwell, but there is not the slightest evidence that they had any part in prompting the movement, or seriously affecting its character while Henry lived. The only change made in the church was in its relation to the papacy by substituting the king's authority for that of the Pope. The old system of ecclesiastical polity, with its elaborate hierarchy of archbishops, bishops and cathedral clergy, was retained. Its doctrinal system was fixed by the publication of the Six Articles, in which the distinguishing tenets of Romanism were re-enacted, as transubstantiation, communion in one kind, the celibacy of the clergy, the binding obligation of monastic vows, private masses, and auricular confession. The reception of these doctrines was enforced by the severest penalties, and those who denied them were liable to be burned at the stake. As an illustration of the impartiality of Henry's despotism, on the 28th of July, 1540, Thomas Cromwell, one of the great pillars of the Reformation, was beheaded on a trumped-up charge of treason, and two days afterwards three Protestant clergymen were burned for heresy, and at the same time and place four Roman Catholics were beheaded for denying the king's ecclesiastical supremacy and adhering to the bishop of Rome. It may well be supposed that a church originating in such circumstances,

organized under such a head, and imposed upon the people by such tyranny, would necessarily possess some features which would arouse the opposition of the purest and most intelligent of the English people. And, indeed, this was the cause that led to the long and bitter controversies by which the church was agitated, to the cruel persecutions which the established church waged for more than one hundred years against dissenters, and to that religious revolution of which the Westminster Assembly was the culmination and its creed the symbol. And yet, while the iron hand of Henry VIII. moulded the external form of the Church of England according to his will, there was an element of Presbyterianism in the creed of the real reformers which they dared not utter. It came to light afterwards, when it became safe to speak their minds, that the great leaders, such as Cranmer, Hooper, and others, did not regard Episcopacy as a *jure divino*, but rather as a *jure humano* institution, best suited to the circumstances under which the Reformation began, and, indeed, the only form which could be had while Henry reigned. It was equally impossible to set aside the episcopal system during the reign of his son, Edward VI. For a while genuine Protestantism, released from Henry's bigotry and intolerance, made rapid progress, yet the people had no voice in ecclesiastical affairs; in fact, the great majority of the people and of the parochial clergy were in sympathy with the Catholic Church, the whole matter was in the hands of the civil rulers, Cranmer and his associates were timidly conservative, and the case of Hooper, who was imprisoned for refusing to be consecrated with the insignia brought over from Romanism, clearly showed that no radical changes in the ecclesiastical system would be tolerated. The outward progress and open avowal of

the reformed doctrines was checked by the accession of Mary. The ease with which she reversed the ecclesiastical policy of the government, and took the church back to Rome, shows how little hold Protestant doctrines had taken on the people. As Henry had found but little difficulty in bringing the Parliament to vote for withdrawal from the Pope, so Mary found as little difficulty in inducing it to vote for a return. The only demand which it firmly refused was to surrender the property of the monasteries which Henry had confiscated and conferred on members of the House of Lords. A great many Protestants were burned at the stake; but the effect of this was to spread and intensify the popular aversion to a church so cruel. The celebrated saying of Tertullian that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church," was found to be true, and Protestantism was strengthened and purified by the efforts to exterminate it. Many fled to the continent, and there came in contact with the Presbyterian form of church government, and on the death of Mary returned to England filled with the spirit of freedom and scriptural truth which they had there imbibed.

Elizabeth's policy was similar to that of her father, Henry VIII. There was some reason to believe that she was a Catholic at heart, and would have been willing to return to the Roman allegiance if the thing had been practicable. But, as the Pope excommunicated her and denied her legitimacy, her occupancy of the throne depended upon the support of her Protestant subjects. She was, therefore, compelled to be a Protestant in self-defence. As it was, she devoted herself to the maintenance of the national church as then constituted, and to the repression of anything like dissent, or any form of religious liberty. Puritanism as a party, and active

power, made its appearance during her reign, and was greatly strengthened by the return from the continent of the Marian exiles. The Puritans took exception to the vestments worn by the clergy, especially bishops, as being relics of the papacy and significant of erroneous doctrines, as well as to what they regarded superstitious forms and ceremonies. They were generally, though not all, in favor of the Presbyterian form of church government. It is not an uncommon opinion that the early Puritans were, most of them, Independents or Congregationalists. This was not true; the larger number were Presbyterians in sentiment. They did not propose, however, to secede from the national church. Many of them held pastoral charges, some were bishops. They hoped, rather, by fair and open discussion to propagate their views, and to prepare the way for a modification of the government of the church, by the introduction of the office of ruling elder and the establishment of presbyteries and synods. During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, Thomas Cartwright, Professor of Divinity in the University of Cambridge, than whom no man of his day bore a higher reputation for profound scholarship, pulpit eloquence, acuteness, judgment, and piety, introduced into his lectures at the university the discussion of questions relating to the subject of ecclesiastical polity. He maintained the following positions:

1. That there were but two divinely-constituted offices in the church, namely, those of bishops or elders, and deacons, and that all others, archbishops, diocesan bishops, archdeacons, *et cetera*, ought to be abolished.

2. That every church ought to be governed by its own ministers and elders.

3. That every minister should have the charge of a particular congregation.

4. That ministers should be openly and fairly chosen by the people.

In addition to these doctrines he held others which were in opposition to the practices and institutions of the Established Church, but which were in harmony with the Presbyterian system. Cartwright was deprived of his professorship, and expelled from the university by the ecclesiastical authorities. So great was the persecution waged against him, that he was forced to leave England and take refuge on the continent. Cartwright has not received the honor, in the history of Presbyterianism, which is his due. His fame has been eclipsed by that of Calvin and Knox, but his system was as pure, and his sacrifices for the truth as great, as theirs, though, unlike them, he suffered defeat. Green, in his *History of the English People*, now so widely read, and so deservedly admired, though he is in hearty sympathy with the political principles of the Puritans, denounces Cartwright with partisan bitterness, because in the first place, he held that the Presbyterian form of government was taught in the Scriptures; secondly, that all spiritual power and jurisdiction, the decreeing of doctrine and the ordering of ceremonies, lay wholly in the hands of the church, which Green calls placing the state beneath the feet of the church; and thirdly, because Cartwright did not rise to the full conception of religious toleration, as if that was peculiar to him. It is a melancholy fact that the true principles of toleration were not understood in that age even by the best and wisest of men. At this very time, the Established Church, in league with the state, was hounding this godly and learned man to imprisonment and exile. The same author praises Hooker, the leading writer against Presbyterianism, because he abandoned the "narrow ground" of scriptural argument

to base his conclusions on the general principles of "moral and political science," on the "eternal obligations of natural law."

In 1572 many of the Puritan clergy, with a number of laymen of prominence, formed themselves into a presbytery at Wandsworth, a place not far removed from the city of London. This was the first presbytery ever organized in England. A large portion of the London clergy soon attached themselves to it, and other presbyteries were established in neighboring counties. Thus nearly a hundred years before the meeting of the Westminster Assembly Presbyterianism was planted in England in an organized form. And yet, this movement was not an attempt to set up a Presbyterian church separate from the national establishment. It was rather a private association of clergymen and laymen for carrying into effect the Presbyterian discipline for the benefit of themselves and their congregations, without seceding from the church. And though, a few years later, an effort was made to organize the several presbyteries into synods, it was not proposed to throw off the authority of the bishops. The idea of leaving the national church would have been regarded by these reformers as schismatic, and would have been abhorrent to their principles. The first separatists were the Brownists or Independents, who had no affiliation with the Presbyterians. It is said that this scheme of Presbyterian church government was signed by as many as five hundred ministers, amongst the ablest and best in the realm; so early and so rapidly had these principles taken root and spread. It is not improbable, to say the least, that if the truth had been allowed a fair field the subsequent history of the Church of England would have been very different from what it was. But this and all such movements were put down

by Elizabeth's government with cruel violence, and came to naught, except as they strengthened and perpetuated the great principles involved, until an opportunity arose for reasserting and establishing them, as was done finally in the Westminster Assembly.

The most celebrated work written on the Episcopal side during the controversy waged in Elizabeth's reign as to the claims of the two rival systems of church government was that of Richard Hooker, entitled "Ecclesiastical Polity." Mr. Cartwright and those who held with him took the ground that the form of church government adopted by the apostles at the founding of the Christian Church was the Presbyterian, in which the only two orders of church officers were presbyters and deacons, and that this form, being of divine origin, should be retained by the church in all ages and all countries. Hooker replied, in substance, that even if it were true that the polity of the Apostolic Church was Presbyterian, it did not follow that that form should necessarily prevail universally and permanently. "The Holy Scriptures," he said, "are a perfect standard of doctrine, but not a rule of discipline and government; nor is the practice of the apostles an invariable rule or law to the church in succeeding ages, because they acted according to the circumstances of the church in its infant and persecuted state." Making the admitted distinction between natural and positive law, he claimed that the laws relating to the government of the church, being of the nature of positive laws, are not immutable, but may be changed with changing circumstances. One fundamental error in this reasoning is the assumption that all positive laws, even those enacted by divine command, can be altered by human authority, whereas they can be altered only by the lawgiver himself, as was done in

the case of the positive laws of the Mosaic dispensation. It will be observed, however, that the ground upon which Episcopacy is now defended is very different from that on which Hooker defended it. Its advocates now claim that it is of divine authority, and therefore cannot be changed, a claim not made by Hooker. On the whole, it is evident that the principles afterwards embodied in the Westminster system were widely disseminated, and took deep root in the English mind during the reign of Elizabeth, notwithstanding the bitter persecution waged against their adherents.

Elizabeth's successor, James I., had been brought up in the communion of the Scottish kirk, and those who were not acquainted with his character and past history might have hoped that on coming to the English throne he would throw his influence in favor of Presbyterianism, at least so far as to procure toleration for those who held to its principles; but if they did indulge those hopes they were destined to be grievously disappointed.

The history of the Reformation in Scotland was in striking contrast with the history of the Reformation in England. In the latter it originated in the caprice of an unprincipled despot; in the former the movement began with the people as the result of personal conviction. The doctrines of the Protestant reformers probably found their way into Scotland through the secret circulation of the writings of Luther and others. The first, so far as is known, who openly and systematically preached them was Patrick Hamilton, a young man of royal lineage, great talents and burning zeal. In 1526 he went to the continent and studied under Luther and Melanchthon. On his return he devoted himself to the preaching of the truth. He was arrested and burned at the stake. The martyrdom of one so young, so high-born, and so accom-

plished, helped to attract attention to the doctrines for which he suffered. They spread with considerable rapidity in the next ten years, notwithstanding the bitter persecution which was waged, in which many perished at the stake. In 1546 the party had become so strong that the Protestant nobles rose in armed resistance to their persecutors. In 1560, by the aid of Queen Elizabeth of England, the government forces were defeated, and the right to hold a free parliament was extorted. This body met on the first day of August, 1560. One of its first acts was to abolish the Roman Catholic Church as the Church of Scotland, to prohibit the mass under severe penalties, and to require the Protestant ministers, of whom John Knox was the chief, to draw up a confession of faith, which was there and then adopted as the standard of the national church. On the twentieth of December of the same year, the ministers and many of the leading Protestant laymen met together for the purpose of organizing the new church, and devising means for carrying on the work. This is called the first meeting of the Scottish General Assembly. There were present only six ministers and thirty-four laymen. Their first step was to draw up a book of church order, defining the system of ecclesiastical government which they proposed to adopt, and their principles of church discipline. This is known as the First Book of Discipline, to distinguish it from another standard afterwards adopted, embodying substantially the same principles, but in their application to the system more thoroughly developed in practice. The system thus established has prevailed in the Church of Scotland from that day to this, and has come down to us through the Westminster Assembly. Through all the intervening years the Scotch church has battled and suffered for those principles, and the blood of its martyrs,

poured out like water, has rendered the soil of Scotland sacred ground in the eyes of all Presbyterians the world over. It is somewhat remarkable that, in an age and country in which for so long a time they had been accustomed to the rule of a powerful hierarchy, the Scottish reformers should have reached, at the very outset, the true and scriptural theory of the church. It is equally strange that, in an age and country accustomed to monarchy and aristocracy in the state, they should have conceived the idea of a republican form of government for the church. This may be accounted for in part by their acquaintance with the Genevan church and the writings of Calvin, though theirs was a more thorough development of Presbyterianism than prevailed in Geneva. The real cause, however, lies in the fact that they took the Scriptures as their sole and infallible guide of faith and practice, and modeled their church organization after that which was established by the apostles.

But although Protestantism in Scotland originated in individual conviction, and grew by the propagation of the truth, yet, in accordance with the ideas universally prevalent in those days, it was, as a church, established by an ordinance of the civil government. Thus an alliance of church and state was formed, which, while it furnished a support and defence to the church in its exposed and feeble infancy, was followed in later years by deplorable results, from which it has not yet recovered. It is true the reformers did not hold that this alliance was of such a character as to give the state any power over the church, but only, as at Geneva, to sustain the church and enforce its decrees. But the politicians held a different theory, and acted upon it when it could be made to serve their selfish purposes. Accordingly they devised a scheme by which the titles of arch-

bishops and bishops were continued in the church, though the incumbents were not to be allowed to exercise the episcopal powers. The object of this scheme, to which the Assembly was brought reluctantly to submit as an *ad interim* arrangement, was to enable the unscrupulous politicians to get control of the funds of the church, through their tools, the episcopal appointees. This was a clear violation of the rights of the church and the wishes of the Protestants. For if there was any one element of the polity of the old church to which the Scotch were peculiarly hostile it was episcopacy. This arrangement furnished the starting-point of a systematic and persistent effort to force episcopacy on the Church of Scotland, which was stubbornly resisted, and which led to untold sufferings. In 1580, under the leadership of the celebrated Andrew Melville, the General Assembly asserted its authority, and, by a unanimous vote, abolished the arrangement and required the bishops to demit their pretended offices. James VI. viewed these proceedings of the Assembly with the greatest disapprobation, and he undertook to defeat them by the appointment of an archbishop of Glasgow. The church, however, stood firm, though brought into dangerous collision with the king. Melville and his associates were of the stuff of which heroes and martyrs are made. But from this time to the close of his reign James pursued the uniform policy of trying to subject the ecclesiastical courts to his own control, to deprive them of all authority, and to force bishops on the church. He felt that the freedom of the Presbyterian system was incompatible with despotism in the state, while the bishops could be used as the instruments of his tyranny. His motto was, "No bishop, no king." To secure the subjugation of the church he did not hesitate to resort to deceit and

persecution. Some of the most eminent ministers in the kingdom were banished. In 1603 he succeeded to the English throne, under the title of James I. But no change was made by this in his ecclesiastical policy, except to render it, if possible, more uncompromising and severe. By the close of his reign in 1625, the prelatical party had secured the control of the Church of Scotland, the offices of bishop and archbishop were established, and the courts of the church were virtually suspended.

From the course pursued by James towards the Church of Scotland we can easily infer his policy in England. He identified himself with the high church party. He avowed, at the beginning of his reign, his enmity to the Puritans. Some, who petitioned to be relieved from the disabilities to which they were subjected, were thrown into prison. At the conclusion of the Hampton Court Conference he said to the Puritan representatives, "If this be all your party hath to say, I will make them conform themselves, or else I will harrie them out of the kingdom, or else do worse, only hang them all." This declaration furnishes the key to his subsequent policy. Ministers who refused to conform to what they regarded as superstitious ceremonies were silenced, and sometimes shut up in prison, or forced to leave the country. Many distinguished for their learning and piety, together with their devoted followers, preferred exile, with religious liberty, to their beloved country groaning under civil and religious despotism, and sought refuge in Holland, where English churches were erected after the Presbyterian model. Some, driven by episcopal oppression to the opposite extreme of church government, adopted the independent polity, and after a temporary residence among the liberty-loving and hospitable Dutch, emigrated

to New England, and laid the foundations for a new church, and a new commonwealth. The foolish, bigoted, and tyrannical rule of James I. was one of the chief causes which led to such fatal results to his family and his kingdom, and to that great religious revolution which culminated in the Westminster Assembly.

Charles I. fell heir to the principles, as well as the throne, of his father. The latest of the great English historians speaks of "the strange mixture of obstinacy and weakness in his character, the duplicity which lavished promises, because it never purposed to be bound by any, and the petty pride that subordinated every political consideration to personal vanity or personal pique." "There is reason to believe," says Macaulay, "that he was perfidious, not only from constitution and from habit, but also on principle. He seems to have learned from the theologians whom he most esteemed that between him and his subjects there could be nothing of the nature of mutual contract; that he could not, even if he would, divest himself of his despotic authority, and that, in every promise which he made, there was an implied reservation that such promise might be broken in case of necessity, and that of the necessity he was the sole judge." This is the man whose portrait was recently *consecrated* with solemn religious ceremonies, performed by high religious functionaries, in an American church. Such an act is but little less than profanation, and is treason to the cause of civil and religious liberty. Charles I. undertook, with the aid of Wentworth, to establish a despotism in the state, and, with the aid of Archbishop Laud, a despotism in the church. No liberty of belief or practice was to be allowed. All were required to be members of the Established Church, and all were required to conform, in the minutest particulars, to its rites and

ceremonies. Laud was an Arminian in his theology and semipapal in his ecclesiastical polity. His purpose was to bring the Church of England into an agreement with the Church of Rome as nearly as could be done without abandoning its separate existence. He was not content, therefore, with punishing infractions of well-established laws and customs, but added others of his own invention, which were enforced with equal severity. The High Commission Court and the Star Chamber Court were the instruments of his oppressions. Burton, Prynne, Bastwick, and Leighton, gentlemen of respectable rank, learning, and piety, for advocating in print views of church government and Christian morality displeasing to Laud, were set in the pillory, scourged, their ears cut off, their noses split, their faces branded with a hot iron, and themselves condemned to perpetual imprisonment. Any attempts of the Parliament to check these outrages were regarded as an infringement on the king's prerogative as the head of the church. Episcopacy had already been forced upon the Scotch, but Laud was not content without their more thorough conformity to the Church of England, and now proceeded to impose upon them a Book of Canons and the English Liturgy, or rather, as Macaulay says, "A liturgy which, wherever it differed from that of England, differed, in the judgment of all rigid Protestants, for the worse. The attempt to enforce these foreign ceremonies produced a riot, and the riot rapidly became a revolution." The Scotch entered into a solemn covenant with one another and with God to defend their religious rights, and flew to arms. In 1640 the English Long Parliament met and proceeded to correct the evils of the administration, both civil and religious. The bishops were excluded from the House of Lords; Laud was arrested, impeached, and afterwards

executed, and finally the episcopal system was entirely abolished.

The abolition of episcopacy left England without any national church. This was a state of things which, according to the ideas then prevalent, was not to be allowed. Consequently, on the 12th of June, 1643, an ordinance was passed by Parliament calling an assembly of divines to meet at Westminster, on the first day of July following, for the purpose of reorganizing the church; or, in the language of the title of the ordinance itself, "to be consulted with by the Parliament, for the settlement of the government and liturgy of the Church of England, and for vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the said church from false aspersions and interpretations." The Scottish kirk was invited to send commissioners to aid and advise in the deliberations of this Assembly, and about the same time the two nations entered into a Solemn League and Covenant, binding themselves, amongst other things, to preserve the Reformed religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government; the reformation of religion in the kingdoms of England and Ireland in doctrine, discipline, and government, according to the word of God, and the example of the best Reformed churches; and to endeavor to bring the churches of God in the three kingdoms to the nearest conjunction and uniformity in religion, confession of faith, form of church government, directory for worship, and catechising.

The religious situation of Britain at the time of the meeting of the Westminster Assembly was the result of the series of events which I have thus endeavored to outline. It can be understood and appreciated only by a careful consideration of the causes by which it was produced.

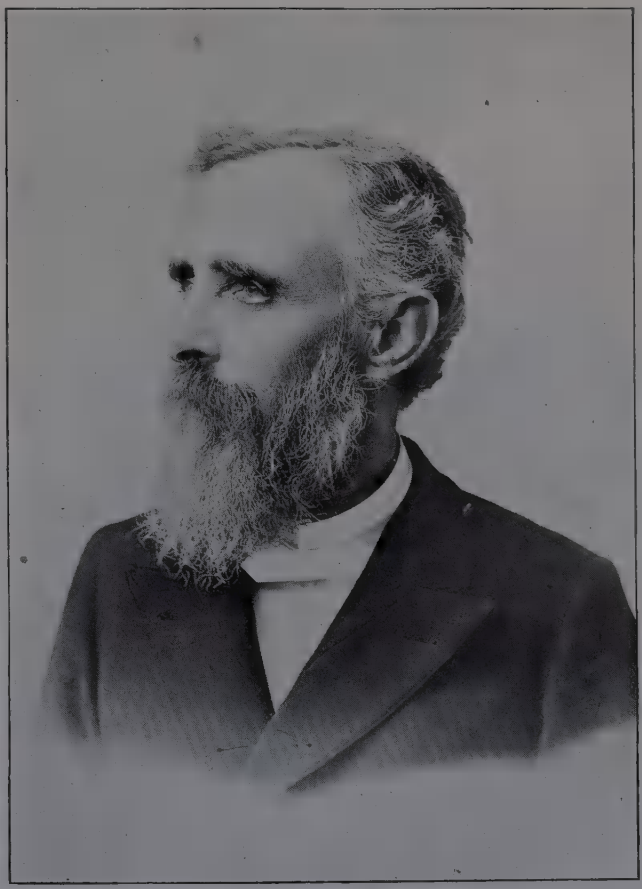
1. The English Puritans and the Scotch Puritans had risen against their oppressors and had united to right their wrongs. In England the national church had ceased to exist. The calling of the Westminster Assembly was necessary to the formulating of their common doctrines, and the settlement of their church polity. The great majority of the English Puritans, and the entire body of the Scotch Puritans, were Calvinistic in their theology, and Presbyterian in their views of church government. It was natural, therefore, that this system should be adopted.

2. There was a small but growing body of Independents in England, and they had their representatives in the Westminster Assembly, men of piety, learning, and ability. They rejected the idea of a national church altogether; indeed, they rejected the idea of any visible organic union between separate congregations, and held to the self-governing power of the individual churches, without responsibility to any superior court of appeal, civil or religious. They professed also a larger religious toleration than either the Episcopalians or Presbyterians. How much this tolerant spirit was due to the fact that they were the weaker party, we cannot determine. One thing is true, that in their settlements in New England, where they were supreme, they were not tolerant. This party exerted an influence in the Assembly out of proportion to their numbers, or the strength of their principles, through the support of Cromwell and the army, and they were able to obstruct and somewhat modify the Assembly's action.

3. The members of Parliament were mostly Presbyterians, but unfortunately many of them held to Erastian principles, and were unwilling to relinquish the control of the church by the state. This party was also repre-

sented in the Assembly by some of the greatest scholars of the day, such as Selden and Lightfoot. Their learning and eloquence in the Assembly had no effect except to prolong the discussion, but their influence in Parliament hindered the thorough application of the system adopted by the Assembly to the church at large.

It is not given to me to speak of the results of the Westminster Assembly, but I may be permitted to remark, that it is to the peculiar experiences of the people of God in England and Scotland, their long contentions for the truth, and their bitter persecutions, during the period over which we have travelled in this discourse, that we are indebted for that incomparable statement and definition of Christian doctrine, which forms the standards of the Presbyterian churches in England, Scotland, Ireland, and America.



REV. T. D. WITHERSPOON, D. D., LL. D.

III.

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY: ITS PLACE OF MEETING, ITS PROCEEDINGS, AND ITS PERSONNEL.

BY

REV. T. D. WITHERSPOON, D. D., LL. D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY AT LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY.

ANALYSIS.

The place of meeting.—External description.—The Abbot's Place.—The doorway and entrance.—The Jerusalem Chamber.—Why so named.—Its size.—Window.—Fireplace.—Refectory.—Tapestry hangings.—Here Assembly met, 1643.—Varied memories of the place.—The ordinance calling the Assembly.—The proceedings.—The opening service.—The sermon by Dr. Twisse.—Parliament present.—Constitution of the Assembly.—Number of members.—Number attending.—Assessors.—Scottish Commissioners.—Most of the members connected with the national church.—All Calvinists in doctrine.—Doctrinal harmony.—Divided in polity.—Five parties.—Episcopalians.—Independents.—Presbyterians.—Moderate Presbyterians.—Moderate Episcopalians.—Description of the Assembly proceedings.—How they conducted debate.—The moderator.—The vice-moderators.—Two scribes.—How the members were seated about the chamber.—Their varied costumes.—The days and hours of sitting.—The committees of the Assembly.—How they worked.—The quorum was forty members.—The devotional services.—The order of discussion.—Baillie's description.—The leading men in the Assembly.—Twisse.—Burgess.—Palmer.—Selden.—Pym.—Rouse.—Lightfoot.—Gataker.—Coleman.—Marshall.—Arrowsmith.—Tuckney.—Hoyle.—Wallis.—Henderson: his work.—Gillespie: his ability.—Rutherford.—The general character of the Assembly for ability, learning and piety.—Placed high in each particular.—Clarendon's estimate unfair.—Milton's scarcely impartial.—The Satirists' absurd.—Banter's more impartial.—High character.—They had profound reverence for the authority of Holy Scripture.—Had deep sense of dependence on God.—They spent much time in prayer.—They fasted at times, once a month at least.—Solemn religious services.—Lightfoot's description of one fast-day given.—Collection taken for poor.—A single prayer two hours long.—Rugged men for rugged work in rugged times.—Like a sea-girt island—on windward side strong cliffs withstand the raging waves, and protect the leeward side, with its fruits and flowers—so they stood against the storm of their time.—We have the blessing they procured.—We should be grateful.

III.

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY: ITS PLACE OF MEETING, ITS PROCEEDINGS, AND ITS PERSONNEL.

THE visitor to Westminster Abbey, as he approaches its western or principal front, is struck with what at first view seems a singular blemish upon architecture otherwise faultless and imposing. Immediately in front of the lofty façade, clinging like a barnacle to its base, is a small rectangular structure, humble of proportion and homely of style, which begins just south of the great central doorway of the cathedral, and extends across the entire southern part of the front, connecting itself with a larger building on the right, of which it forms a part, and which was originally the "Abbot's Place," or home of the abbot and his Benedictine monks. The little structure, though it does obstruct, as far as its poor altitude will allow, the view of the stately cathedral, has, nevertheless, a real significance in art. It serves as a foil to set forth more conspicuously the loftiness of the cathedral, and to heighten our impressions of its grandeur, the little homely structure fitly representing the humble abode of man; the lofty cathedral with magnificent reach of tower and arch, of gable and spire, an appropriate symbol of the sublime dwelling-place of God.

And now, if we turn but a step or two to the right from the walk leading to the great central doorway, we shall find a modest door opening into this little building,

and if we are so fortunate as to gain admission, shall find ourselves in the celebrated Jerusalem Chamber. It is a narrow, rectangular room, running north and south, about forty feet in length by twenty in breadth. The small door, at which we suppose ourselves to have entered, is on the western side of the room and very near its northern end. As from our point of entrance we look down the long room, we see that its western wall is pierced at the centre by a large double window, the only one opening into the room, and, indeed, the only one needed, as it pours in a great flood of light. Immediately opposite this window, on the eastern side of the room, is a great fireplace with its open grate, the genial warmth from which attracted the Assembly to this chamber as a meeting-place when the chapel of Henry VII. had become uncomfortable by reason of the cold. Beyond the fireplace, and almost at the end of the room, opens a doorway, the principal one in size and importance. It leads through an ante-chamber, and by connecting hallways, into what was once the refectory or dining hall of the Abbey. The chamber in which we stand was in the ancient days of monastery the "withdrawing-room" or private apartment of the abbot, to which he retired for meditation and prayer; and the small door through which we suppose ourselves to have entered opened into his conservatory or garden. The name, Jerusalem Chamber, was derived from the tapestries with which the walls were hung in earlier days, and which portrayed different scenes in the siege of Jerusalem. The visitor to-day finds the walls hung with tapestries, but not with those which originally gave the name. Indeed, even when the Westminster Assembly held its sessions, the original tapestries had given place to others representing the history of the

planets. The latter, which have since given place in their turn to others, must have been attractive, for old Robert Baillie, "the Boswell of the Assembly," whose eye nothing escapes, tells us in one of his inimitable letters that the room was "well hung," as he also tells us that the light from the great window was softened by "curtains of pale thread with red roses," and that the room "has a good fyre, which is some dainties at London."

What memories cluster about these walls! The painting over the fireplace, with its encircling Scripture texts, reminds us that it was in this chamber that Henry IV., the grim old warrior, put off his crown at the touch of death. For when, in his extreme old age, he had thought to do penance for his usurpation by a crusade for the recovery of the holy sepulchre, and when, with the royal galleys in port, ready to bear him to sea, he had come to pay his parting devotions at the shrine of Edward the Confessor, he was seized with a chill, and borne into this chamber and laid before the fire on a pallet until a chamber could be fitted for him. And when he had been borne to his bed in another room, and realized that the end was at hand, there occurred the scene which Shakespeare has dramatized for us in immortal verse:

"KING HENRY: Doth any name particular belong
Unto the lodging where I first did swoon?
WARWICK: 'Tis called Jerusalem, my noble lord.
KING HENRY: Laud be to God! even there my life must end.
It hath been prophesied to me many years,
I should not die but in Jerusalem;
Which vainly I suppos'd the Holy Land.
But bear me to that chamber; there I'll lie;
In that Jerusalem shall Harry die."

In this chamber Sir Thomas More was confined for four days on his way to the Tower, where he was held

in cruel imprisonment by Henry VIII., and from which he was led forth to execution. Here lay in state the body of Dr. Robert South, the greatest and wittiest of English court preachers. From this chamber was carried forth, after lying in state for four days, the body of Addison in that memorable funeral procession at dead of night which Lord Macaulay has so graphically described, when "Bishop Atterbury, one of those Tories who had loved and honored the most accomplished of the Whigs, met the corpse and led the procession by torchlight round the shrine of St. Edward and the graves of the Plantagenets to the chapel of Henry VII.," Whig and Tory vying with each other to do honor to England's illustrious essayist and *litterateur*.

Here, also, lay in state the body of Sir Isaac Newton, wept by the whole world, and followed forth by the leading members of the Royal Society as its escort, to be buried, as the *London Gazette* of the following week informs us, "in a spot in front of the choir, which, being one of the most conspicuous in the Abbey, had been previously refused to various noblemen who had applied for it." Nor are the associations with the Jerusalem Chamber altogether sad. Twenty years or more before the gathering of the Westminster Assembly the Abbey became the residence of John Williams, one of the most notable men of his day, who was at once Dean of Westminster and Archbishop of York, "the last churchman," says Dean Stanley, "who occupied at once an archbishoprick and a deanery, one of the few eminent Welchmen who have figured in history." Dean Williams was possessed with a noble passion both for architecture and for music. He expended several thousand pounds in the repairing and beautifying of the Abbey, using only his own private means; "neither," says the chapter-

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

house record, "would he impatronize his name to the credit of that work which should be raised by other men's collatitious liberality." The Jerusalem Chamber was his special delight. The attractions which drew the Assembly to it were largely due to his care. Here he gave musical entertainments which were the delight of London, as "he made the Jerusalem Chamber a volary of the choicest singers that the land had bred." Here, also, he gave royal banquets, and when, in 1624, the ambassadors from the court of France were present to arrange for the ill-starred marriage of Charles I. to Henrietta Maria, a banquet was ordered to be given by the dean in their honor; and so, as Bernard, the old chronicler, tells us, "the king's will signified, the invytement at a supper was given and taken, which was provyded in the colledge of Westminster, in the roome named Hierusalem Chamber."

Thus, through scenes alternatively of sorrow and joy, the old chamber passed as the generations rolled by, but for all time its chief claim to historic interest will arise out of its connection with the proceedings of the Westminster Assembly, to which we will now direct our attention.

The ordinance convening the Assembly passed both houses of Parliament and became a law on the 12th of June, 1643. It was entitled "An Act for the Calling of an Assembly of Godly Divines and Others." It directed that they should meet "at Westminster, in the chappell called King Henry the Seventh's Chappell, on the first day of July, in the year of our Lord, 1643 . . . : to conferre and treate amongst themselves of such matters and things touching and concerning the liturgy, discipline and government of the Church of England, or the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same from all

false aspersions and misconstructions, as shall be proposed unto them by both or either of the said houses of Parliament, and no other; and to deliver their opinion and advices of, or touching, the matters aforesaid, as shall be most agreeable to the word of God, to both or either of the said houses from time to time, in such manner or sort as by both or either of the said houses of Parliament shall be required; and at the same time not to divulge by printing, writing, or otherwise, without the consent of both or either houses of Parliament."

In obedience to this ordinance, on Saturday, July 1, 1643, the Assembly met in the Abbey in the face of a great company, and its proceedings were opened with a sermon by Rev. William Twisse, D. D., the prolocutor, from the text, John xiv. 18, "I will not leave you comfortless," "a text," says the old chronicler of that day, "pertinent to these times of sorrow and anguish and misery, to raise up the drooping spirits of the people of God who lie under the pressure of popish wars and combustion." Immediately after this service, in which both houses of Parliament were present and took part, and which was probably held in the choir of the Abbey, the members designated to the Assembly ascended the steps of the Chapel of Henry VII., and there the enrollment was made.

The ordinance constituting the Assembly called for two divines from each county of England and one from each county of Wales. To these were added four from the city of London, two from each of the two universities, two from Ireland, and others from important boroughs, so that the whole number of divines named in the ordinance was one hundred and twenty-one. If all had attended there would have been a fair representation of all shades of Protestant belief in the land, except

that of the extreme high-churchmen represented by Archbishop Laud on the one hand, and that of the extreme Independents on the other, who really believed in no form of church government. In point of fact the advocates of an episcopal form of government, including Archbishop Ussher, Bishops Brownrigge and Westfield and many others, were, for the most part, royalists, and as the king, by royal proclamation from his camp, forbade the gathering of the Assembly, they all, with the exception of Bishop Westfield and Dr. Featley, declined to attend. The former of these two died very soon after the sitting of the Assembly, and the latter, having violated the ordinance of Parliament in reference to divulging the Assembly's proceedings, was, by order of that body, expelled before Dr. Westfield's death. Those who actually attended and took part in the proceedings, about eighty-five in all of the original one hundred and twenty-one, together with some twenty or thirty others whose names were added by Parliament from time to time to fill vacancies occasioned by declinature or by death, were, with few exceptions, Presbyterian in views of church polity, though regularly in orders in the Church of England.

To these divines, the number of whom from first to last amounted to something like one hundred and fifteen, must be added thirty "lay assessors" as they were called, twenty of whom were members of the House of Commons, and ten of the House of Lords. Of the ten peers very few attended with any regularity, and none took any prominent part. Of the commoners, however, many were constant and interested attendants, and a few amongst them took free and active part in the discussions, although one of the latter class, the illustrious John Selden, says facetiously, in his *Table Talk*, that

the lay assessors were sent not to do work, but merely "to overlook the clergy, just as when the good woman puts a cat into the milkhouse to kill a mouse she sends her maid to look after the cat, lest the cat should eat up the cream." Nor must we fail to add the small, but most potent Scottish contingent; the General Assembly of Scotland, having, in view of the prospective adoption of the Solemn League and Covenant for uniformity of religion throughout the realm, named four of her ablest divines, and three of her most illustrious laymen, as Commissioners to the Westminster Assembly. Five of these, four ministers and one layman, appeared and took their seats, and, though declining to vote, took very active part in the discussions and debates, and, as the results show, really exerted a moulding influence upon all the work of the Assembly.

When we inquire into the doctrinal beliefs of these men from all parts of the realm, and all, with the exception of the Scotch Commissioners, and a few Independents, in the regular communion of the Church of England, we may be surprised to be told that they were, to a man, and through and through, Calvinists. If there was an Arminian in all the body he did not have the courage to lift his head. Nor should this surprise us, for the Church of England, in all the days of its noble struggle for civil and religious liberty, was, in its best elements, as intensely Calvinistic as the Church of Scotland, or that of Holland. All the great English Reformers, Anselm, Bradwardine, Tyndal, Wycliffe, Ussher, Whitgift, and others, were Calvinists. Men may play with Arminianism in times of peace, but in the great crises of spiritual conflict there is nothing but the solid bedrock of the eternal sovereignty of God on which the foot can rest with any sense of security; and in times

like these, churches, as well as individuals, unconsciously become Calvinists. The Westminster Assembly was not called together to formulate a creed. It already had one, clearly enunciated, universally accepted—the one Calvinistic creed of the great Reformed Church in all its branches. The language of their commission was, as we have already quoted it, very explicit: "For the vindicating and clearing of the doctrine of the same (the Church of England) from all false aspersions and misconstructions." They were not to frame a creed, but to state the accepted creed of the church in language that would not be open to the aspersions of the cavilling, or to the misconstructions of honest inquirers after truth.

In the matter of church polity, on the other hand, the Assembly was greatly divided. First, as to the proper form of church government, at least five parties come into prominence in the discussions. On the one extreme are a few advocates of episcopal government, pure and simple, as we have it in the Church of England at the present time. On the other extreme are a few Independents, numbering amongst them some of the ablest men of the body, especially those known as "the five dissenting brethren," Thomas Goodwin, Philip Nye, William Bridge, Jeremiah Burroughs, and Sidrack Simpson, all recently returned from exile in Holland, and recognized as amongst the ablest debaters and most learned men of the body. They are in favor of a purely congregational form of government, as we have it in our Baptist and Congregational churches to-day. Between these extremes are three other clearly-defined parties. Leaning toward the Episcopalians, and constituting what we may call the right centre, is a very strong party, including the Prolocutor, Dr. Twisse, Mr. Gataker, Mr. Palmer, Dr. Temple, and many other eminent men, who incline

to a Presbyterianism, with Sessions, Presbyteries, and Synods, but modified by an order of superintendents who shall really have many of the functions of bishops, but without the name. Over against them, constituting what we may call the left centre, were the Scotch Commissioners, and the English divines and laymen of the school of Cartwright, who contended with all their eloquence, learning, and genius, for a *jure divino* Presbyterianism, as explicitly ordained in Scripture. Between these, as the true centre of discussion, was the large body who held to a Presbyterian form of government, not as authoritatively ordained in Scripture, but as consistent with the teaching of the word of God, and as conservative of the spiritual liberties of the people. It was upon this centre that the Assembly finally rested, its Book of Discipline containing a Presbyterianism pure and unmodified, not as *jure divino*, but as "lawful and agreeable to the word of God."

In the matter of church discipline there was wide divergence, leading to prolonged and heated debate. There was a party of Erastians in the Assembly, small in number, but containing some of the ablest and most illustrious men, not only of the Assembly, but of the age in which they lived. It is only necessary to recall the names of Selden, Lightfoot, and Coleman to exhibit something of its strength; and, strong as it was in the ability of its defenders, it was still stronger from the well-known sympathy and support of the Parliament; for although that body had unceremoniously stripped the king of all ecclesiastical authority, it had done so with the express purpose of retaining in its own hands the power of administering discipline for spiritual offenses, so that the Erastians of the Assembly counted on the weight of the Parliament's well-known support.

Having thus indicated the lines along which discussion would naturally run, it may be interesting to look in for a moment upon the working of the Assembly itself. The Jerusalem Chamber has been specially fitted to receive the body. At the northern end a platform, a foot in height, has been erected to receive the chair of the Prolocutor, or, as we would say, Moderator of the body. Immediately in front of this platform, upon the floor, one to the right and the other to the left, are two chairs for the two "Master-Assessors," or, as we would say, Vice-Moderators. Beginning a little in front of the Moderator's platform, and extending down through almost the entire length of the chamber, is a long, narrow table, and at the upper end of this are two chairs, for the two "scribes," or, as we would say, clerks of the Assembly. Along the western side of the room, beginning near the long table, and extending upward to the wall, are several of what Robert Baillie calls "rankes of formes," or what we would call tiers of seats, each tier seating comfortably ten or twelve persons. The seats on the lowest tier, and on the end nearest the Prolocutor, are given, as the place of honor on the Prolocutor's right to the Scotch Commissioners; the remaining seats in all the tiers are reserved for the members of the House of Commons. To the Prolocutor's left, running along the eastern wall, as far as the fireplace, are similar tiers of seats; and at the extreme end of the room, along the whole southern wall, are similar tiers also. These two divisions of seats are occupied by the English divines, who fill them pretty closely. An open space is left about the fireplace, and there, on comfortable chairs, which they can move about at will, sit the members from the House of Lords, whenever it pleases their lordships to be present.

It is an interesting sight to stand by the Prolocutor's

chair and look over the body, the lords with their jaunty cloaks and their dangling swords; the English divines in their black gowns and Geneva bands; here and there a churchman in his full canonicals; the commoners with their short cloaks, knee breeches and silken hose, the sombre colors constrasting notably with the gay foppery of the lords; and then, the Scotch Commissioners, clean shaven and close shorn, with waistcoats buttoning closely up to their chins, snugly-fitting coats, knee breeches and silver-buckled shoes.

The Assembly sat every day in the week except Saturday. Its usual hours were from 9 A. M. to 3 P. M. It was broken up into three great committees, on one or the other of which every member's name was enrolled. To each committee one section was assigned of the work to be done. When this committee had prepared the section carefully with all the Scripture proofs bearing upon it, it reported to the Assembly and another section was assigned. Nothing could come before the Assembly that had not first been carefully digested and formulated by one of the committees. At the hour fixed for assembling, the Prolocutor took his seat and opened with prayer. Forty constituted a quorum. If that number were present, the proceedings of the previous day's session were read, and the business proceeded. If a quorum were not present, the body resolved itself into a committee of the whole for informal conference and discussion until a quorum was had. Then Mr. Byfield arose, read the section or paragraph under discussion, then the first passage of Scripture in its support, and the issue was joined. The rules of procedure were similar to those in one of our presbyteries, with a single notable exception: if two or more speakers sought the floor at the same time, instead of the presiding officer, as with

us, deciding the question of right to the floor, the decision was left to the body of the Assembly, each member shouting vociferously the name of the one whom he desired to hear; and so, amidst a din well represented in the engraving of the Assembly, which some of us may have seen, entitled "Cry him down," "the divines," as old Robert Baillie tells us, "confusedlie call on his name whom they desire to heare speake, and on whome the loudest and maniest voices call, he speakes."

In an Assembly full of men of striking personality, and of prominent relation to the stirring events of the time, it is difficult to decide what particular characters it may be most interesting to study. Let us begin with the Prolocutor, Rev. William Twisse, D. D. He was one of the notable men of his day. A man of sixty-eight years of age, a scholar crowned with the highest honors of the University of Oxford, a high Calvinist of the supralapsarian school, and a theologian of such profound erudition and such speculative genius that his great Latin folios as they came forth, one after another, filled all the continent of Europe with his fame, so that it has been said that he was better known and more honored abroad than at home, he was, nevertheless, so modest and retiring, so wedded to the seclusion of his study and so indifferent to fame, that he declined all offers of promotion and remained to the day of his death in an humble vicarage at Newbury. Appointed by Parliament to the prolocutorship of the Assembly, no position could have been given him for which he was less fitted or whose duties were more irksome to him. Unskilled in parliamentary law, diffident of his own judgment, incapable of strong self-assertion, dreamy and absent-minded in the midst of the long debates, he strove to do his duty in an office which he would have been only too

glad to demit, but to which he was held by the order of Parliament, it being, says Dr. Baillie, "the canny conveyance of those who guide most matters for their own interest, to plant such a man of purposes in the chair."

In one respect, however, he was admirably fitted for his office. One of his duties was to make both the opening and closing prayer at every meeting of the Assembly; and, being a man of intense fervor and consecration, twice a day he carried the Assembly, with all its cares and burdens, on his great heart up to the throne; and it was while thus importunately pleading that he was stricken with his last illness, and, falling back in his chair, was carried to his bed to rise no more. A touching revelation of his true character appears in the statement of his biographer, that, when informed that the end was near, a smile irradiated the face of the old scholar and theologian, as he exclaimed with animation, "Now, at length, I shall have leisure to follow my studies to all eternity."

Turning from Dr. Twisse to the Master Assessor, who occupies the chair in front and to his right, we find a man of altogether different mould. Dr. Cornelius Burgess is not wanting in scholarship and learning, for he has taken both degrees in divinity at Oxford, and is recognized as one of the most learned divines and most powerful preachers in London; but, unlike Dr. Twisse, he is every inch a soldier. A man of fifty, with iron-gray hair, shortly cropped, erect and stalwart frame, he comes in with the step of a soldier, makes a military wheel as he takes his chair, looks with the eye of an eagle over the Assembly, and, when he speaks, speaks with the impetuosity of a mountain torrent. As early as 1627 he had been chaplain to Charles I. In the conflict between Charles and the Parliament he had thrown

himself with all his fiery energy into the cause of the Parliament. He has been four times before the Court of High Commission, and now as he sits in the Assembly he is chaplain to the Earl of Essex's regiment of horse in Cromwell's army, and is now and then absent from his seat as he goes to the front and ministers in true Puritan style to the men of his command in bivouac or on the battle-field.

How different from either of those mentioned the man who occupies until his death the other assessor's chair, Mr. Herbert Palmer, sitting in place of Mr. White, whose health has never permitted him to attend. Diminutive of stature, he is known as "the little Mr. Palmer"; but, though small of body, he is a man of gigantic intellect, and of such nobility of nature and greatness of soul as to win universal admiration and love. He is, perhaps, the most accomplished in polite literature of the English divines. So fluent and graceful is he in the use both of the French and Latin tongues that he is charged with the conduct of the foreign correspondence of the Assembly. He is master of Queen's College at Cambridge, and university lecturer, a man of independent fortune, who delights to use it in the education of young men for the ministry and for other good causes. But his chief attraction for us is the fact that he may truly be called the "Father of the Shorter Catechism." He was noted long before the meeting of the Assembly for his devotion to catechetical instruction. He had prepared a number of catechisms, the most important of which was in its fifth edition when the Assembly convened. He was chairman of the Committee on the Directory, and had the subject of catechising especially assigned to him by the committee. He was chairman of the Committee on the Catechism until his

death, and, though the finishing touches to the Catechism were given after his death by Anthony Tuckney, who succeeded him, yet a comparison of our present Larger and Shorter Catechisms with the last edition of the Catechism of Mr. Palmer will show how largely we are indebted to him for those incomparable summaries of doctrine which grow only the more priceless with the lapse of years.

Passing over for the present the Scotch Commissioners, let us recall one or two of the members of Parliament, as they sit over on the right. There, *facile princeps*, is John Selden, the "learned Selden," "the glory of the British nation," as Grotius terms him, *Antiquariorum Coryphæus*, as he is styled upon the tablet erected to his memory at Oxford. He was, for the extent of his erudition and the versatility of his genius, incomparably the foremost scholar of his age. As a lawyer he was without a peer at the English bar; whilst as a historian, as a theologian, as an archæologist, a linguist, an antiquary, he enjoyed a reputation fully as great. He was a recognized authority in civil law, in canon law, in rabbinical law, indeed was master of all rabbinical lore. His sway was equally felt in philology, in heraldry, and in all departments of literature. Representing the University of Oxford in the Long Parliament, he spared time to attend the sessions of the Assembly only when some question was up for discussion that specially interested him; and when it was known that he was to speak every ear was attent, his great eloquence and commanding genius swaying the Assembly as the wind bows the trees of the forest.

Not far from Mr. Selden sits another member, a deeply-interested listener, and often an earnest participant in the debate. I need only call the name, John Pym, and

there arises before you the figure of the great Puritan patriot, the matchless leader of the parliamentary party in its struggle for constitutional liberty against the tyranny of Charles I. He was the one man who had the sagacity to see that the Earl of Strafford, the king's chief counsellor, was, with his sullen determination, and his power of intrigue, the Richelieu upon whom Charles leaned. He was the only man in the realm who had at once the courage to move the impeachment of the Earl, and the magnetic eloquence with which to arraign him at the bar of the House as the "great promoter of tyranny in the realm"; and to carry by an overwhelming vote the order which led the great leader to the scaffold, and gave the death-blow to schemes of oppression which only his resolute courage and inflexible will could have carried to success.

One more of these commoners must receive at least a passing notice. Sitting quietly there, taking an intelligent interest in all the discussions, is Francis Rouse, author of the well-known Rouse's *Version of the Psalms*. When he came into the Assembly the psalmody in use was the old rugged one of Sternhold and Hopkins. Mr. Rouse had already prepared a metrical version of the Psalms, and, by request of the Assembly, revised it for use in its services, and it is this version, afterwards amended from time to time, that is still in use amongst the "psalm-singing churches" of Scotland and of this country. It is an anomaly, as strange as it is interesting, that those rugged old paraphrases, with what Rufus Choate calls their "uncommon pith and gnarled vigor of sentiment," and what Sir Walter Scott characterizes as "a rude sort of majesty which perhaps would be ill exchanged for mere elegance"; that those old psalms which were the heritage of our Scotch fathers for so

many generations, and to the music of which the heroic Covenanters marched to the battle or to the stake, were composed by a South-of-England man, who possibly never was in Scotland, and were first wafted to God in song, not upon the moors of Scotland, or in the Greyfriars or Old St. Giles, but amidst the stately columns and under the fretted arches of an English cathedral.

It would be interesting, if we had time, to sketch the characters of a few at least of the English divines, such as John Lightfoot, the world-renowned author of the *Horæ Hebraicæ et Talmudicæ*, and Thomas Gataker, distinguished both in oriental and in classical research, and Stephen Marshall, the popular preacher and renowned ecclesiastic, with his colleagues of the famous Smectymnuus, all of whom were members of the Assembly. There were also Arrowsmith and Tuckney, professors of divinity at Cambridge; Hoyle, professor of divinity at Dublin; Wallis, professor of geometry at Oxford, the first mathematician of his day, and a host of other men of note.

We pass, however, to those in whom we are most interested—the Scotch Commissioners. First amongst them, indeed the foremost man, after John Knox, of the Church of Scotland, is Alexander Henderson. The providence that gave him to the church as a leader was wonderful. About the year 1615 Robert Bruce, the distinguished preacher, held a communion service in the vicinity of the parish church of Leuchars. That church was being served at the time by a young divine of the Established Church, who had been imposed upon the church by the bishop over the protest of the congregation. On the day for his induction, the congregation, with true Scotch tenacity, had locked the doors of the church, so that when the bishop and attendant ministers

came to conduct the installation they were unable to enter, until the young minister who was to be installed climbed up to one of the windows, and, breaking his way in, succeeded in forcing the doors so that the farce of installation might proceed. This young minister, who was no other than Alexander Henderson, having heard of the great fame of Mr. Bruce, and being curious to hear him, attended his service, seating himself in a retired place where he supposed his presence would not be observed. When the assistant minister had finished the preliminary service, Mr. Bruce came forward, and after a solemn pause, as was his custom, uttered most impressively the words of his text, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that entereth not by the door into the sheep-fold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

The words of the Master, so singularly appropriate and so solemnly uttered, were carried home with resistless energy by the Spirit. The unspiritual nature of his whole past ministry appeared to Mr. Henderson with appalling distinctness. By God's grace he came into a new life; and with this new experience came, under closer study of the word, a conviction of the divine right of Presbytery, and Alexander Henderson stepped forth from the scholarly retirement to which he had devoted his life to become the great leader in the sanguinary strife for Christ's crown and covenant. He combined rare gifts as a leader, and perhaps in no other way can I better exhibit to you that remarkable combination of endowments which gave him unparalleled influence in Scotland than by depicting a scene in which all his marvellous powers were put to the fullest test. It was at the celebrated General Assembly of Glasgow in 1638, over which, as over several successive assemblies in

those stormy times, he was called, in deference to his great powers as a leader, to preside. The avowed purpose of this Assembly being to abolish episcopacy, and a number of bishops having sent in their declinature to recognize the authority of the Assembly, Charles I. determined to interpose in their behalf, and sent the Marquis of Hamilton as his commissioner, with authority and instructions to dissolve the Assembly if it should undertake to deal with the refractory bishops. The intense excitement may be conceived when the hour arrived for the consideration of the answer of the bishops. The Marquis of Hamilton, a distinguished soldier, fresh from the camp and in military dress, occupied a conspicuous chair in front, and a great concourse of people filled the hall. The answer of the bishops having been read, Mr. Henderson, with that stately dignity and overawing gravity which were characteristic of him, arose and asked if it was the pleasure of the Assembly to proceed to the trial of the bishops. On this the Marquis of Hamilton sprang to his feet and declared that it was not in accordance with the pleasure of his majesty, King Charles, that the relations of the bishops should be disturbed, and he was present in the king's name to interdict any proceedings in that direction. Mr. Henderson, in a very courteous and well-considered address to his grace, expressed the thanks of the Assembly to King Charles for having convened them, and gave assurance of their loyalty and their desire to conform themselves as far as possible in all things to the king's will, but reminded him that being now constituted as a court of the Lord Jesus their first allegiance was to him and his law, and then calmly, without the least sign of perturbation, put the question again as to whether the Assembly was ready to proceed with the trial of the bishops.

Astonished beyond measure at what seemed the audacity of the moderator, but, controlling himself as well as he could, the Marquis arose and declared that such proceedings would be revolutionary, and if persisted in would necessitate his immediate withdrawal as the representative of the royal court. With a manner as bland as a summer day, the moderator replied to his grace that it was a great pleasure to the Assembly to have his distinguished presence, that they should exceedingly regret his withdrawal, and trusted he would consent to remain, as nothing treasonable or disloyal was in any of their hearts, and then resolutely put, the third time, the question, "Is the Assembly ready to proceed with the trial of the bishops?" The commissioner now sprang to his feet in a towering rage, drew from his pocket the written instructions of the king, and declared that he would immediately dissolve the Assembly if another word were spoken on this subject. Above all the din of confusion throughout the hall the calm, courageous voice of the moderator was heard. Standing in the high pulpit, far above the heads of the people, his majestic form looming up, and a light as from the throne irradiating every feature, he seemed a fitting representative of the court of heaven as he looked down, with an air almost of patronage, into the face of the commissioner of an earthly sovereign, and kindly but firmly told him that the Assembly could not and would not, even upon pain of the king's displeasure, prove disloyal to the King of kings. Then came the supreme moment, when, amidst a wild turbulence that even the calm voice and majestic mien of the moderator could but partially suppress, the Marquis of Hamilton stepped to the front, in imperious tones declared, in his majesty's name, the Assembly dissolved, proceeded to discharge every member under highest

pains and penalties from taking further part, and then, calling upon every loyal subject of the king to follow him, stalked down the aisle and out of the door, his sabre rattling behind him.

When the door had closed, Mr. Henderson's wonderful self-possession and genius appeared. Calming the turbulence of the excited throng that was ready to pursue the Marquis with personal violence, Mr. Henderson commended him for his fidelity to his sovereign, and for carrying out the instructions given him to the letter; then, turning, reminded the Assembly that they were commissioners of a greater King, and urged them by the example of the king's servant and representative, to obey, even to the death, the inspired and authoritative instructions of King Jesus. The effect was magnetic; the bishops were brought to the bar, convicted of contumacy, and deposed, Mr. Henderson conducting the ceremony of deposition amidst a solemnity and awe that would have befitted the judgment day.

Another wonderful man is George Gillespie, the youngest, and in many respects the most remarkable member of the body. Born in 1613, in the little town of Kirkcaldy, on the Firth of Forth, the son of a humble, consecrated minister, he was sent to the University of St. Andrews (to the praise of beneficiary education be it said) as "Presbytery's bursar" or beneficiary. Graduating with distinction in his seventeenth year, he completed his theological course just as the great struggle was on for the divine right of Presbytery, and refused Episcopal ordination, vowing that he would never be ordained while the world stood, except by a scriptural presbytery. Serving in obscurity and without ordination, as the private chaplain to Lord Cassilis, in that same memorable month of July, 1637, when Jennie Geddes, in

the cathedral of St. Giles, threw her stool at the head of the Dean of Edinburgh for presuming to "say mass at her lug," this unknown youth was sending through the press in Holland, because it could not be published in Britain, a work entitled, *A Dispute Against the English Popish Ceremonies, Obtruded upon the Church of Scotland*, a book which immediately lifted him into fame, which probably did more even than the stool of Jennie Geddes to overthrow prelacy in Scotland, and to whose matchless learning and resistless logic no answer was ever attempted by the prelatists, except the cheap one of commanding every copy of it to be burned at the stake.

Young as he was, Mr. Gillespie was one of the foremost men of the Assembly. All are familiar with the incident recorded of him, disputed by some, but seeming to have historic ground, that when the Committee on the Catechism had found themselves unable to construct a satisfactory answer to the question, "What is God?" and, referring it to the Committee of the Whole, that also had failed, it was proposed that Mr. Gillespie, as the youngest member, lead in prayer for the special aid of the Spirit, and when he had begun his prayer with the words, "O God, who art a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in thy being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth," the body felt that their prayer was heard, and the coveted answer sent, and so entered that incomparable answer which can never be improved upon to the end of time.

The chief reputation of Mr. Gillespie rests upon the marvellous breadth and readiness of learning, and the wonderful genius and power of debate, which made him, young as he was, the mainstay of the Assembly in its hard battle with the forces of Erastianism, led on by

Selden and Lightfoot and Coleman, intellectual giants, and supported by all the prestige and influence of the Parliament. On a memorable day, when, in framing the Book of Discipline, the subject of excommunication had been reached, and the committee was ready to report, affirming excommunication to be an exercise of spiritual function, and therefore to be administered by the church through spiritual courts, and not by the civil magistrate, Mr. Selden left his seat in Parliament and came to the Assembly for one of his greatest efforts. It was known that he would speak, and the Jerusalem Chamber was thronged; the lords in their chairs, every member in his form, and all spectators who could procure a "writ of invytment" from Parliament (for none could enter, "either to see or to heare, lett be to sitt," without written permission) were occupying the extra seats. The passage of Scripture under consideration, as supporting the spirituality of excommunication was that in Matthew xviii. 15–17, "Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee," etc. As Mr. Byefield read the passage, every eye was fixed upon Mr. Selden, who arose with the dignity and affability that were natural to him, and proceeded to argue that excommunication was a purely civil penalty amongst the Jews, that the word translated *church* in the original Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, referred to a civil, not to an ecclesiastical tribunal; and then, with a little jocular reference to the men who "carried their little gilt-edged English Bibles in their pockets, and were always quoting from them," he began to quote, with a fluency and copiousness that seemed amazing, from the original Hebrew of the Old Testament, from the Chaldee Targums, from the rabbinical Hebrew of the Mishna, and the Gemara, from Josephus and Philo, from orientalists and scholars, until his oppo-

nents and their cause seemed hopelessly buried under the mass of Hebraic and Talmudic literature with which he had overwhelmed them.

At the close of his most subtle and powerful argument the Assembly seemed dazed. Herle and Marshall made attempt to reply, but failed to make any impression. It looked as if the cause of spiritual independency was lost, when Samuel Rutherford turned to Gillespie, and said, with intense earnestness: "Rise, George, rise up, man, and defend the right of the Lord Jesus to govern, by his own laws, the church he has purchased with his blood." Under this strong appeal the young man arose, and without a note before him proceeded to analyze the speech of his learned opponent, stripping the argument of all the vast rubbish of learning in which it was encased, exhibiting its inherent weakness; and then, in a masterly exegesis of the passage, showed by seven distinct lines of argument, that the excommunication referred to was spiritual. The offence, a trespass, was spiritual; the offended stood in spiritual relation as a brother; the end aimed at was spiritual, to gain him; the method of procedure was spiritual, telling it to him alone; the court, a spiritual court; the censure, a spiritual censure; the effect, exclusion from spiritual interest and privilege. With such acuteness, fervor, sincerity and eloquence did he argue, that before he had gone far he was producing a profounder impression even than that of Selden; and when he concluded, not only had he carried the Assembly with him, but Selden himself is said to have exclaimed, with mingled admiration and chagrin, "That young man has, by a single speech, swept away the learning and labor of ten years of my life."

Time will permit me to allude to but one man more, and I refer to him simply as illustrating the marvellous

versatility of character and gift of these men. Who has not heard of Samuel Rutherford? Who that has read his almost inimitable "Letters" has not come to think of him as some sweet, saintly soul, like St. Bernard or Thomas A'Kempis, wrapt in quiet contemplation of the Master, or absorbed in pleading at the throne for the souls of men. Who thinks of him as a scholar of such repute throughout all Europe that he is time and again called to chairs of divinity in the leading universities on the continent? Or who thinks of him as one of the war-horses of his day? Let a single scene, by way of illustration, suffice. We are all familiar with the sweet hymn of Mrs. Annie Cousins, in which she has so exquisitely paraphrased the words of Rutherford on his death-bed. We love to think of the sweet, saintly man as his seraphic piety breathes in these words:

"Oh! Christ, he is the fountain,
The deep, sweet well of love;
The streams on earth I've tasted,
I'll drink more deep above.
There to an ocean fullness
His mercy doth expand,
And glory, glory dwelleth
In Immanuel's land."

But let us not forget that it was while on the same death-bed, and only a short time before, that a message came from Charles II. summoning him to appear before the next Parliament on the charge of high treason. Lifting himself from his couch, and pointing with his bony finger, he said to the messenger, "Go, tell your royal master that it behooveth me to appear before a higher judge and judicatory than his, and ere a few days arrive I shall be where few kings or great men ever come."

I have drawn deeply, almost inexcusably, upon your

patience; let me, in conclusion, dwell for a moment upon the character of the Assembly as a body. It has met with very varied estimate. Lord Clarendon, in his self-styled *History of the Rebellion*, has given to the whole history and work of the Assembly but a single paragraph, and that as contemptuous as language could make it; but this paragraph was written after he had sought in vain to bend the Assembly to his will. Milton, in a grim play of humor in his *Paradise Lost*, has evidently made the sitting of the Assembly the basis of one of his pictures of the infernal world, as, speaking of the employments of the fallen angels, he says:

"Others, apart, sat on a hill retired,
In thought more elevate, and reasoned high
Of Providence, foreknowledge, will and fate;
Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute;
And found no end, in wandering mazes lost."

But Milton wrote this and all his criticisms after the Assembly had condemned his work, *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, which he had dedicated to that body with words of very highest praise.

The satirists and punsters of the day found in the Assembly, of course, a tempting subject for their jests and jibes:

"Pretty Synod doth it sit,
Voyd of grace, as well of wit,
And make no canons;
But such as ordinance are called,
Which have the very souls enthralled
Of every man on 's.

"Now from black Tom and blacker Noll,
That kill and flay without control,
Thereby to end us;
From Synod's nonsense and their treason,
And from their catechistic reason,
Good heaven, defend us!"

But in the face of all prejudice and calumny, as the years move on, men will come more and more to the judgment of a contemporary, Richard Baxter, who had reason to be impartial, when he says: "The divines there congregated were men of eminent learning and godliness and ministerial abilities and fidelity; and, being not worthy to be one of them myself, I may the more freely speak that truth which I know, even in the face of malice and envy, that as far as I am able to judge by the information of all history of that kind, and by any other evidence left us, the Christian world since the days of the apostles had never a synod of more excellent divines (taking one thing with another) than this Synod and the Synod of Dort."

There are two things, which, in addition to their learning, genius, and intrepid courage, must ever commend them to our admiration. The first is their reverence for Scripture. Not only did they give it "the first place, the place of honor," in the Confession of Faith, but a cardinal rule of the Assembly was that, "What any man undertakes to prove as necessary, he shall make good out of Scripture," and an examination of the published proceedings will show that the authority of Scripture as the inspired and infallible word of God was in every case bowed to with reverence and submission as the arbiter of all controversy and the basis of all belief.

The second characteristic is the sense of humble dependence on God, as seen in the prominence given to prayer. Not only were the daily sessions opened and closed with prayer, and often interspersed with prayer for specific objects, but once a month all business was regularly suspended, that a day of fasting and prayer might be observed in concert with the two houses of Parlia-

ment. And what days they were! We read, for instance, in Lightfoot's Journal, that on Friday, October 13, 1643, the order is taken for the fast on the following Monday in these words: "The time to be from nine to four; the exercises to be the word and prayer, three to pray and two to preach. Dr. Burgess, Mr. Goodwin, and Dr. Stanton to pray, and Mr. Palmer and Mr. Whittacre to preach."

And then on the following Monday we have this record: "Monday, October 16th. This day we kept a solemn fast in the place where our sitting is, and no one with us but ourselves, the Scotch Commissioners, and some Parliament men. First, Mr. Wilson gave a picked psalm, or selected verses of several psalms, agreeing to the time and occasion. Then Dr. Burgess prayed about an hour; after he had done, Mr. Whittacre preached upon Isaiah xxxvii. 3: 'This day is a day of trouble,' etc. Then, having had another chosen psalm, Mr. Goodwin prayed; and, after he had done, Mr. Palmer preached upon Psalm xxv. 12. After this sermon we had another psalm and Dr. Stanton prayed about an hour, and with another psalm and a prayer of the Prolocutor, and a collection for the maimed soldiers, which arose to about £3, 15s., we adjourned until to-morrow morning."

It seems almost incredible to us that men should have remained continuously in devotional worship from 9 A. M. to 4 P. M., and that, as Dr. Baillie tells us, a single prayer was sometimes two hours long; but in those times, when all the interests of the kingdom of Christ seemed to be in peril, men felt their dependence on God, and when once at the throne of grace knew not how to come away until the blessing was obtained.

Rugged men in sooth they were, but the times were

rugged, and the characters of the men were suited to the times in which they lived. Go around upon the windward side of one of our sea-girt islands, where the storm breaks in its wildest fury, and the waves roll in mountain high. Look at those tall cliffs that rise perpendicularly out of the sea, as if they had advanced to meet it in its tempestuous rage. God's great breakwaters for the protection of the sunny isle behind them, they bare their breasts by day and night to the storm, and hurl back waves that toss the mightiest ships like straws upon their bosom. You do not expect to find on the face of these cliffs the fair verdure, the delicate flowers, or the softened outlines of the hills over on the leeward slope. The only lines of architecture you expect to find on these granite cliffs are the rude ones cut by the chisels of the tempest; but as you look up to them and think of the mighty forces of night and storm with which they have contended, and the steadfastness with which they have repelled every invading foe they seem to you all the more glorious, and fill your soul with all the more reverence, because of their rugged simplicity, God's great bastions against the encroaching sea.

And so, as we contemplate the lives and characters of these illustrious men, whose lot was cast in the midst of the storms of political and ecclesiastical revolution, who heroically bared their breast to the tempest, receiving in full shock, and hurling back in defiance the waves of despotic absolutism in the state, and hierarchical oppression in the church, their majestic forms loom up before us in the thick of the conflict for the defence of the civil and religious liberties which we enjoy, and there is a majesty and a sublimity in the rugged grandeur of their natures that overawe us. We uncover our heads with reverence before them, and our souls thrill with emotions

of gratitude, admiration, and love, as we remember that it was because they stood breast-deep amidst the waves, and maintained their position, inflexible and unawed, under all the fury of the tempest, that we are to-day in the midst of a Presbyterianism, which under the soft sunlight of God's truth, covers all its fair fields with verdure, bids the fragile fern unfold upon the barren cliffs its graceful fronds, and fills the world with the delicate aroma of its flowers.

REV. R. L. DABNEY, D. D., LL. D.

IV.

THE DOCTRINAL CONTENTS OF THE CONFESSION—ITS FUNDAMENTAL AND REGULATIVE IDEAS, AND THE NECESSITY AND VALUE OF CREEDS.

BY

REV. ROBERT L. DABNEY, D. D., LL. D.,

OF VICTORIA, TEXAS,

FOR MANY YEARS PROFESSOR IN UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY, VIRGINIA.

ANALYSIS.

I. The Doctrinal Contents of the Confession.

Its system Calvinistic.—Pauline.—Two regulative ideas.—God's purposes revealed in Scripture.—The nature and attributes of God.—Catechism.—First question.—The fourth question.—Covenant of works.—Of grace.—In harmony with nature and end of God.—Confession theocentric at root.—In a relative way, anthropocentric and Christocentric.—Hence Trinity and attributes prominent.—Moral attributes.—The redemption of Christ must agree with the conditions.—Archibald Alexander quoted.—Westminster divines fitted for their work.—The Confession has two marked features.—It is scriptural.—It is moderate.—The framers of the Confession knew philosophy and theology.—Yet left metaphysics out.—Built the Confession on Scripture.—The debates were settled by the word.—False philosophy indirectly refuted.—Even the patristic authority put below that of the Scriptures.—The propositions of Confession are biblical.—Hence of permanent value.—Need no revision.—Confession moderate.—A system.—Parts related.—An arch.—An organism.—Holds Trinity.—Is neither supra nor sublapsarian.—Teaches God's providence.—Sets forth original sin.—Asserts imputation.—Announces the penal and substitutionary nature of Christ's work.—Speaks of assurance.—Alludes to the millennium.—But extremes of statement are carefully avoided.—Prudent moderation.—No narrowness.

II. The Necessity and Value of Creeds.

A creed defined.—Illustrated.—Its conditions.—Relation to Bible.—Holy Scripture the final and infallible creed.—The Standards must express the contents of Scripture.—Subscription to our Standards only by officers.—Not by members.—No persecution for opinion's sake.—No expulsion from the universal church.—Admits recognition of other denominations.—Communion of saints.—Objections to creeds.—Christ gave no command to set up human standards.—Creeds assume that the Bible is lacking in some important respect.—These two sets of objections fully answered.—Visible church needs a creed.—Versions of Scriptures same.—Creeds useful for instruction.—Valuable as a witness for true doctrine and holy practice.—Creeds serve to interpret clearly the Scriptures.—Are useful for instruction.—Cases quoted.—Argued.—Actual creed always.—Better to have it written than not.—Creeds are, plain, honest statements to others of our doctrines.—They serve as a bond of union and co-operation.—Our Confession one of the very best for these important purposes.—So commended.

IV.

THE DOCTRINAL CONTENTS OF THE CONFESSION: ITS FUNDAMENTAL AND REGULATIVE IDEAS, AND THE NECESSITY AND VALUE OF CREEDS.

FIRST there is assigned to me the consideration of the doctrinal contents of the Confession, with its fundamental and regulative ideas. Should I attempt an examination of these heads of doctrine in the limited time allowed for these addresses, the result could be little more than a table of contents, dry and uninstructive to educated Christians. The Shorter Catechism already gives us such a summary of most of the heads treated in the Confession, and superior to anything which one man could now produce. All admit that the Confession embodies that system of revealed theology sometimes termed the Pauline, sometimes the Augustinian, and popularly the Calvinistic. Should we question prevalent public opinion as to the peculiar and dominant features of that system, it would point us to what are popularly termed the five points of Calvinism. But these propositions are themselves consequences or conclusions drawn from more ultimate principles. It is among these, then, that the fundamental and regulative ideas of the Confession are to be sought. These I conceive to be two: the supreme end of God's dispensations revealed in Scripture, and the constitution and attributes of the Godhead.

The first principle is settled for us in the first question

of the Catechism. If "man's chief end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever," then God's chief end in creating and governing him must correspond; it must be the promotion of God's own glory in the holiness, service, and blessedness of his rational creatures. And the same conclusion must follow, from the definition of God, as a Spirit, eternal and unchangeable in all his perfections. He who is before all other things, who is the Creator of all things, the absolute owner of all things, the sustainer of all being, must have found his intended end in himself alone; and being unchangeable, his supreme thought and purpose must ever remain what they were from eternity. But as the end must shape the means, it is thus made certain *a priori* that every procedure of God in providence and redemption will be shaped with controlling reference to its tendency to promote his glory. The covenant of works, the preceptive and penal law, the covenant of grace, the method of man's justification and sanctification, the agent and instrument therefor, with all God's temporal nd final judgments upon men and angels, must be so selected as best to correspond with the divine perfections.

It has been debated among theologians whether the controlling point of view for the science of redemption is anthropocentric, Christocentric, or theocentric. Those who assert the first point of view seem to rest upon the maxim that the nature of the disease determines the nature of the remedy. This is the plan upon which Principal Hill constructed his excellent book upon divinity. The covenant of grace is God's remedy for man's breach of the covenant of works. Therefore the moral and legal state into which man reduced himself by his fall must dictate the nature of the gospel remedy. When the doctrine of original sin is settled, it must logically determine

our views of the gospel. The history of doctrine teaches us that there is a profound, though not ultimate, truth in this proposition. If the Pauline view of man's death in sin and condemnation is held, then the Pauline view of sovereign, supernatual regeneration will be adopted. If the Pelagian view of man's state since the fall is held, the Pelagian scheme of redemption will follow. Enfeebled conceptions of the office work of the Son and the Spirit, in and for man, will naturally introduce lower conceptions of the persons and nature of these gospel agents, until the fatal logical stress brings the theology down to mere Socinianism. All this is true, and it is most instructive. But it is not the ultimate truth of revelation. The prior question lies behind it: why must man needs be redeemed when fallen? As to the sinning angels, no such "needs be" operated. It does not seem that the Westminster Assembly adopted the anthropocentric as their dominant point of view.

As to the second scheme, the Messiah is unquestionably the Alpha and Omega of our salvation, "the way, the truth, and the life," without whom no man can come to God, our prophet, priest, and king, in whom our redemption is complete, because all the fulness of the Godhead dwelleth in him bodily, and he is "the head of all principality and power." He is also the revealer to men of the invisible God, so that no man knoweth the Father except as he knoweth the Son. But these truths are not to be so pressed as to exclude from our view the parts of the Father and the Spirit in the work of redemption. And this work, while all-important to us sinners, and while the crown and glory of all God's other works, is not the whole of his providence towards his creatures.

The ruling point of view, therefore, assumed by the Westminster divines is the theocentric. It is the con-

stitution of the Godhead as a trinity in unity, and the august circle of the divine attributes which regulate everything in their system of revealed theology. And hence again it results, that every head in their system of doctrine must converge to God's glory as its ultimate end. Why must the law be for reasonable creatures a rule of perfect righteousness? Because God is perfectly righteous. Why must he who breaks it be inexorably condemned? Because God is unchangeably just. Why are sinners, so justly condemned, redeemed at such cost? Because God's love and mercy are infinite. Why must violated law be completely satisfied before this infinite mercy can flow forth to the miserable? Because God's retributive justice is essential and immutable. How comes it that a daysman can be found who has "a right to lay down his life for sinners, and take it again"? Because Messiah is as truly Son of God as Son of man. Why must sanctification invariably follow justification? Because God is holy. How can man, dead in sin, live again unto God? Because the Holy Spirit, the quickener, is an almighty agent. Such are a few of the instances which display the method which has regulated the construction of revealed theology in our Confession.

Dr. Archibald Alexander once made this statement: that the Reformed Protestant theology reached its zenith in the seventeenth century. The Westminster Assembly was convened near the middle of that age, and in the midday light of its learning and genius. Had we no histories of its members, and no record of its discussions, the contents of the Confession itself are enough to teach us that those profound and illustrious scholars were enriched with all the stores of sacred learning gathered from previous ages, and culminating in their glorious epoch. They knew the past history of the church, and

of doctrine, and of philosophy, and had before them all the great symbols of the previous ages, from the Council of Nice to the Synod of Dort. Providence thus qualified them for their important task to the most eminent degree, and set them in that historic epoch most favorable to success. In speaking of their work, I propose to signalize in the remainder of this address two of its remarkable traits. One I may describe as its scripturalness, the other as its moderation.

It is impossible to question the full acquaintance of the Westminster divines with the history of doctrine and philosophy. We find the treatises of the Middle Ages colored and almost shaped by the Peripatetic philosophy. Their authors justified this result by pointing to the intimate, and, as they claim, unavoidable connections of philosophy with theology. Our divines knew all this perfectly well. They knew the tenor of the Platonic, the Aristotelian, the Sophistic, the Stoic, the Academic philosophies of the ancients. They understood the contests of Scotists and Thomists, of Realists and Normalists. Bacon had written a few years before, and the debates between Gassendi and Des Cartes were then agitating the scholars of the continent. The new physics and astronomy of Copernicus and Galileo were eagerly supplanting the scholastic, so that Rome supposed her theology was invaded, and was in need of the thunders of the church for its defence. And even a Turrettin, a generation later than our Assembly, deemed it necessary for the integrity of Scripture to contest the heliocentric theory of the universe. But the Westminster divines more wisely left this physical debate alone, and in their whole system of doctrine not even a tinge of any human philosophy is apparent. Of course, since human philosophy had been so audacious as to attempt the decision of

everything, secular and divine, sacred truths mooted by it had to be settled by the Assembly; but they are determined never on dialectical, but always and exclusively upon biblical grounds. For instance, the Assembly was bound to contradict the materialism of Gassendi and Hobbs, by asserting that the soul of man has a distinct and immortal subsistence. The Bible doctrine of original sin and effectual calling must conflict with Scotism and Pelagianism by teaching the determination of man's fallen will to ungodliness. But the Assembly relies upon Holy Scripture, not upon metaphysics, to support its positions. Nor does it borrow for the moulding of its system the shape of any human school of theology. It is acquainted with all; it is subservient to none. When defining the hypostatic union in the Messiah, it translated into English the material part of the very words of the creed of Chalcedon. Yet it chooses these very terms, not on the authority of an Athanasius, a Basil, an Augustine, an Anselm, a Luther, a Calvin, or an Owen, but because they express the mind of the Holy Ghost in Scripture. So thorough and exclusive is this biblical trait of their propositions, that one might suppose they had bound themselves by the same preliminary rule which had been adopted by the Synod of Dort, when it forbade its members to argue from any human philosophy or ecclesiastical authority. And herein appears the wisdom of this Assembly. Church synods have ever erred, and may always err. Human philosophies are ever changing; consequently a system which builds itself upon these supports must soon appear to totter, and to require amendment or reconstruction. "But the word of God liveth and abideth forever;" the structure which is built exclusively upon this is, like it, permanent. In this we find the chief glory and value of our

Standards. It is for this reason they remain as well adapted to the eighteenth and nineteenth as to the seventeenth century, to America as to Britain, to a popular as well as to a regal commonwealth. It is for this reason that the Confession will need no amendment until the Bible needs to be amended.

The second marked trait of the Confession, its doctrinal moderation, presents the other reason for its permanent adaptation. Divines so learned and able as those of the Westminster Assembly knew well that the body of doctrine which they taught is a *system* of truth. That is to say, the several parts must stand together, in order that the body may have stability. They are logically inter-dependent. The system is an arch, whose strength is perfect as long as each stone holds its proper place; but the removal of any one loosens all the rest and endangers the fall of the whole. Or, to use another similitude, our creed is like an organized living body in this, that the presence and healthy action of each part is essential to the safety of the body.

The Assembly, therefore, was too wise to attempt the conciliating of opposites by the surrender of any essential member of the system of revealed truth. They present us the Pauline, Augustinian, or Calvinistic creed in its integrity. But, on the other hand, they avoid every excess, and every extreme statement. They refrained, with a wise moderation, from committing the church of God on either side of those "isms" which agitated and perplexed the professors of the Reformed theology. Let the following instances be considered.

The Confession firmly asserts the doctrine of a trinity in the Godhead, substantially as it had been taught in the Nicene and Athanasian creeds. It teaches that while God is one infinite, single, spiritual substance, there have

been from eternity three modes of subsistence, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, whose distinctions are real, permanent and personal. It avows that this is a divine fact, presenting a mystery, insoluble for man's limited mind; and it attempts no solution. It contents itself with proving the august fact simply by God's testimony. Now, they well knew that there were attempted *rationales* current throughout the patristic, mediæval and Reformation ages, upon which many theologians had labored, and with which the grandest human intellects, as that of Aquinas, had supposed themselves satisfied. Taking the contents of the human consciousness as their pattern, they theorized that the infinite intelligence must have eternally and necessarily evolved the word from itself in the very exercise of its function of thought; and the Spirit, or practical subsistence, from the continuous exercise of its functions of appetency and will. They said that the unitary Godhead is *actus purus:* its essential functions of thought, emotion, and free choice are identical with and constitute its substance. Hence, its subsistence in the trinitarian mode, said they, is obvious, natural and necessary. The Father is the eternal power of thought and choice. The Son or Word is but the eternal, continuous stream of thought-activity which the central power forever and necessarily emits, and the Spirit is the active emotion and free choice which the infinite thought cannot but evoke, as it is objectified in the divine consciousness. Now, does this metaphysic give us objects which satisfy the meaning of Scripture, where it testifies to us that the three subsistencies, while each divine, are distinct and personal? Or does it give us mere abstractions in the place of persons? Does this theory, or does it not, destroy the fundamental distinction of the reason between substance and its powers? Is it

not virtually that Heraclitic idealism revived in our age by Hegel? Does not the theory involve the monstrous assumption that to think is to create, so that God gives to the second and third persons, as well as to his created works, no other substantive entity than that which a human mind gives to its ideas by thinking them? And does not all this set us on the high road to pantheism? The Assembly knew that popes and archbishops had sanctioned this attempted *rationalé* of the Trinity (as they continue to do to our age). But the Assembly says not one word about it; it passes it all by in dead silence, neither approving it nor deigning to refute it. Why? Because it is wholly extra-scriptural. Were it of true value, the Assembly would have done the same, because its mission did not lead it a single step beyond God's word.

The issue between the supra and sublapsarian theories of the decree had been fully joined and debated before the days of the Assembly. Its prolocutor, Dr. Twisse, was a known supralapsarian. He and his party claimed that their theory was the only one which secured for the decree logical symmetry. Their opponents charged that it came too near making God the author of sin. Again the Assembly refuses to recognize the debate. It will not commit itself to this ultraism of the hyper-Calvinists. It asserts, indeed, that the decree is sovereign, and God's election of his redeemed unconditioned; but further it will not go. Without naming or sanctioning the sublapsarians it adopts the mildness of their theory, while it refuses to raise or to approve the proposition that the several parts of God's infinite and eternal thought have or can have any real order of sequence in his own consciousness; for this is a proposition extra-scriptural, yet asserted in one form or the other with equal rashness by

both parties. Therefore the Assembly will have nothing to do with it, but stops precisely where the word stops.

No divines have taught the doctrine of a sovereign, universal, and particular providence more firmly than they did. But again they refuse to press its *rationalé* a single step beyond the Scriptures. They well knew that in human theologies there were burning questions just here. Does creative omnipotence confer any intrinsic being upon dependent existence, or is their apparent continuous subsistence merely God's perpetual recreative act? Do dependent beings possess any inherent power, or make any active emission thereof? Can even a created spirit emit any specific action except as enabled and determined thereto by a particular *præcursus* of the divine power? Is not this extreme doctrine necessary to sustain the certainty and sovereignty of God's providence? Or does it not virtually make God the author of sin and supersede the creature's responsibility, and thus set us upon the awful verge of pantheism? Or, if we refuse it, how shall we define the method of God's control over second causes? Again our Assembly takes the moderate ground. The Scriptures, while asserting God's power and providence, do not define its method, neither will the Assembly. These divines knew perfectly well that the Aquinist school of popish theologians always asserted this extreme doctrine of the divine *præcursus* with its attendant positions. They knew that a powerful wing of the Reformed (still supported by the great Turrettin a generation later) asserted these positions as essential to the doctrine of providence. But again the Assembly will have nothing to do with them; it will teach that blessed doctrine just so far as Scripture teaches it, *and there it stops.*

All Augustinians, Romanists and Protestants taught

that the race fell in Adam, and that this fall constitutes a permanent and decisive moral revolution, leaving man "dead in trespasses and sins." But what is this revolution? Is it a change of *attributum* or *accidens* in man? Is his inability for the spiritual service of God physical or moral? Some Lutheran Augustinians, in their zeal, taught that the fall had extinguished a part of man's *essentia*. The semi-Pelagians replied that if this were true, then it would be unrighteous in God to hold fallen man longer to his moral responsibility. The Pelagians continued to assert their old maxim, "*If I ought I can*," as a necessary intuition. Many of the Reformed felt it necessary (as Jonathan Edwards, a century later) to resort to the distinction between natural and moral ability, notwithstanding its perilous ambiguities. Behold here again the wise moderation of our Confession! It will not employ or countenance the extra-scriptural distinction. It carefully avoids the ultraism of teaching that the fall destroyed anything in man's *essentia*. It firmly asserts our intuitive consciousness that we are always free agents while we are responsible, while rejecting the Scotist dream of the contingency of the will. It avoids, on the other hand, the Stoical extravagance of condemning all the social virtues of the unregenerate as merely spurious, because short of godliness. But it teaches just the Bible concept of the sinner's state of spiritual deadness with admirable moderation and accuracy, saying, "By this fall men have wholly lost all *ability of will* unto any spiritual good accompanying salvation." Sinners are dependent on sovereign grace for the new life of godliness. Still they are free agents, else they would not be accountable. The fall has not extinguished faculty, else responsibility would be extinguished to the same extent. The unrenewed have social virtues, but

they have no ability of will to begin of themselves those actions of spiritual godliness which constitute the new life. There is the sad but authentic fact, as proved by experience and Scripture, stated with the utmost moderation, charity and precision at once.

Again, is the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin to his seed immediate and precedaneous? Or is it mediate and consequent in the logical order upon men's subjective depravity inherited by race-connection? This thorny debate was troubling the French, Holland and Swiss Reformed at the very time our Assembly was sitting. Joshua De La Place was asserting mediate imputation, and Garrissoles was denouncing him as a betrayer of the whole doctrine. The "Reformed National Synod" of France was admonishing De La Place, and he was explaining and disclaiming. Again our wise divines refused to follow this debate beyond the limits of express Scripture. They assert, as Scripture compels us to do, that the guilt of Adam's first sin is imputed and his corruption conveyed to all the race except the divine Son of Mary; for this sad and stubborn fact is taught by Moses and the prophets, by Christ and Paul. But further the Confession will not go. The race sinned in Adam, and fell with him. But the Assembly will give no metaphysics, nominalistic or realistic, to explain the awful fact, because Scripture gives none.

Again, the Confession asserts with most positive precision the penal substitution of Christ, the imputation of our guilt to him, his punitive sufferings and sacrifice therefor, and the imputation of this satisfaction to all believers for their justification. It holds fast to the truth of particular redemption. Yet it carefully avoids implying any limitation upon the infinite value and merit of Christ's sacrifice. It carefully avoids confusing the two

concepts of legal satisfaction for guilt with the consequent at-one-ment, or reconciliation, of the believing sinner. And it gives no countenance to the *quid-pro-quo* theory of expiation, which affects, with a mischievous over-refinement, to affix a commercial ratio between the sins of the elect and the one indivisible and infinite merit of the divine sacrifice. It asserts, with the strictest Reformed, that saving faith is a divine grace, and establishes in the renewed soul a full assurance of gospel truth. But the Confession refuses to say, along with Luther and Calvin, that a divine and perfect assurance of one's state of grace and salvation is of the essence of saving faith.

Last, we note the caution of the Assembly concerning the millennium. They were well aware of the movement of the early Millennarians, and of the persistence of their romantic and exciting speculations among several sects. Our divines find in the Scriptures the clearest assertions of Christ's second advent, and so they teach it most positively. They find Paul describing with equal clearness one resurrection of the saved and lost just before this glorious second advent and general judgment. So they refuse to sanction a pre-millennial advent. But what is the nature, and what the duration, of that millennial glory predicted in the Apocalypse? Here the Assembly will not dogmatize, because these unfulfilled prophecies are obscure to our feeble minds. It is too modest to dictate a belief amidst so many different opinions.

Such are some of the instances of the prudent moderation of our Standards. Because of this trait our Confession is worthy to be the creed of all gospel churches. And this quality shows us that it is a work which cannot be revised and amended without a breach in its organic integrity. Many are professing to say: Let us have a

creed which shall teach the Reformed system in its substance, but let us retrench its ultraisms and excrescences. The history of doctrine shows us that the Confession has no excrescences. The Westminster Assembly has already pruned them off. The real effect of change will be an amputation of some essential member, endangering the life of the whole structure, not a cleansing away of useless accretions. Let us, then, be wise and hold fast this priceless possession of which a gracious Providence has made us heirs. Our supreme wisdom will be "to let well enough alone," and humbly teach our scriptural creed, instead of attempting vainly to tinker it.

The second branch of the subject leads to the consideration of the necessity and value of creeds. The word "creed" comes to us from the Latin *credo*. According to an old custom, the fathers and Canonists named a religious document from the first word of its text. Thus the papal-bull "*Unigenitus*" is so named because that adjective is the first word of its first sentence: "*Unigenitus filius dei*," etc. In the Apostles' Creed, for instance, *credo* is the first word (I believe in God the Father Almighty, etc.), whence the whole document came to be called the "Credo." We thus learn very simply what a creed means: it is a summary statement of what some religious teacher or teachers believe concerning the Christian system, stated in their own uninspired words. But they claim that these words fairly and briefly express the true sense of the inspired words. The church records several creeds of individual Christian teachers; but the creeds of the modern Protestant world are documents carefully constructed by some church courts of supreme authority in their several denominations, or by some learned committee appointed by them, and then formally adopted by them as their doctrinal standard.

The proper conditions for a just creed should be understood. In order to the reasonable defence of creeds, the conditions for which Presbyterians make themselves responsible should be clearly stated and considered. The Southern Presbyterian Church wholly disclaims everything except the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as either an infallible or authoritative rule of faith and practice. It claims, therefore, for its Standards no rightful influence whatever over the consciences of either clergy or laity except so far as their propositions are sustained by holy writ. We hold, as did the Synod of Dort, that in constructing our Standards we are bound to build exclusively upon the sacred Scriptures, teaching nothing except what is expressly set down therein or what follows therefrom by good and necessary consequence, and asserting nothing upon the authority of any human philosophy, ethics, or of any uninspired theologians. Again, we utterly reject the right of any human authority, whether secular or ecclesiastical, whether orthodox or heterodox, to enforce by civil pains or penalties a profession of belief by any one, lay or clerical, in any creed whatever, whether true or false, or even in the word of God itself. We declare that God alone is the Lord of the conscience. While we hold that all rational beings are morally responsible for erroneous religious and moral opinions, we teach that this responsibility binds to God alone, and not to any earthly authority or ruler, spiritual or political. While we disapprove and lament the holding of false and injurious opinions by our fellowmen, we declare that the only means proper to us whereby to amend them are charity, teaching, faithful admonition and holy example. God alone is the proper avenger of unbelief. Therefore, we have nothing to do with any persecutions or oppres-

sions, or any invasions of men's just liberty of thought, of which some human creeds in the past have been made the pretext. We declare that our responsibility for all such abuses and injustice is utterly dissolved by our reasonable and scriptural position concerning the proper use of human creeds; inasmuch as our doctrine thereon, if faithfully followed, absolutely forbids and renders impossible all persecution for opinion's sake. We also hold that, inasmuch as Holy Scripture commands us "to receive them that are weak, but not to doubtful disputations," we are not to require of penitent believers asking admission to Christ's church any of the heads of our creed, except such as are fundamental to Christian redemption and holy living; but, upon their sincere adoption of the latter, the laity are to be admitted to all the privileges of the visible church. It is only of the pastors and the doctors of the church, and of such other officers as exercise spiritual rule therein, that we rightfully require the adoption of our whole creed, as containing the system of doctrine set forth in the Holy Scriptures. And such requirement of these is reasonable and lawful and absolutely necessary to the faithful testimony of any church unto that system of truth for which her Lord has made her a witness. But, once more, we expressly repudiate the claim of right or authority to dismiss, exclude or expel any person, lay or clerical, from the catholic or universal church of Christ on the mere ground of his dissent from or rejection of parts of our creed. All we claim is the right to separate him therefor from among the teachers of our branch or denomination of the catholic church, leaving him free to join any other denomination whose creed he can heartily adopt. Should any dissentient from our doctrine refuse to us this method of self-protection, he would be invad-

ing our spiritual liberty and not defending his own. For when we have freely associated ourselves unto what we conscientiously believe to be a faithful witness-bearing to the testimony of Jesus, he who should claim to impugn our doctrinal testimony by our own authority would be only perpetrating a gross outrage upon our equal rights and liberty of conscience, and we accordingly declare that we do not limit the being and rights of "the holy catholic church" to that company of believers holding with us our Standards and scripturally denominated by the term Presbyterian. But we recognize as other denominations in the sacramental host all who teach the fundamental doctrines and uphold the morals of Christ's gospel. We believe that the visible unity whereby God is to be glorified is to be found in the faithful recognition of each other's sacraments, orders and church discipline (limited to admonition and spiritual penalties), by each denomination in the church catholic; and not in a fusion and amalgamation of all into one visible ecclesiastical body; a result only made feasible by one or the other criminal alternative, popery or broad churchism.

Objections to creeds remain to be discussed. After the above statement of the use we claim for them, and our repudiation of all right of persecution for opinion's sake, there remain but two objections which have even a seeming show of force. One is, that Christ in Holy Scripture has not commanded or authorized any visible church or church court to set up any Standards, or bonds of communion, of human and uninspired authority. We are challenged to show the place containing such a command from God. We are reminded of our own declaration that "the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants," and of our own strict protests against all such as "teach

for dogmas the commandments of men." The other objection is, that the addition of a creed of human composition implies the arrogant assumption that the language of the church doctors or church courts who formulate such creeds is better, more just, and more perspicuous than the words of the Holy Spirit. But this claim is untrue, vain-glorious, and near to impiety.

The Presbyterian Church retracts no word of her testimony against will-worship and the intrusion of human authority into Christ's church. But she unavoidably holds that "there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed." (Conf., Ch. I., Sec. 6.) No visible church could exist without acting upon this qualification, and adopting, under the guidance of revealed principles, those practical rules of detail imperatively taught her by experience and historical facts. The reply to the first objection is, that such use of human creeds as is defined above comes, like all other human expositions of Scripture, under this class. The same principles which justify these also justify creeds.

All Protestants believe that Holy Scripture should be translated into the vernacular tongues of the nations. Only the Greek and Hebrew are immediately inspired; the translators must be uninspired. Therefore these versions are uninspired human expositions of the divine originals. Wycliffe's version, Luther's, Tyndal's, are but their human beliefs of what the Hebrew and Greek words are meant by the Holy Spirit to signify. These translators might have said with perfect truth, each one, "These renderings into English or German are my

credo." The church which uses such a translation for the instruction of her people and the settlement of even her most cardinal doctrines is using a creed of human composition; and those who exclaim, "The Holy Scriptures themselves are our only and our sufficient creed," put themselves in a ridiculous attitude whenever they use a vernacular translation of the Scriptures, for that which they profess to hold as their creed is still but an uninspired human exposition.

Beyond question, God has ordained, as a means of grace and indoctrination, the oral explanation and enforcement of divine truths by all preachers. Thus Ezra (Nehemiah viii. 8) causes the priests to "read in the book the law of God distinctly, and give the sense, and cause them to understand the reading." Paul commanded Timothy (2 Tim. iv. 2) to "reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine." He, as an apostle of Christ, not only permits, but commands, each uninspired pastor and doctor to give to his charge his human and uninspired expositions of what he believes to be divine truth, that is to say, his creed. If such human creeds, when composed by a single teacher and delivered orally, *extempore*, are proper means of instruction for the church, by the stronger reason must those be proper and scriptural which are the careful, mature, and joint productions of learned and godly pastors, delivered with all the accuracy of written documents. He who would consistently banish creeds must silence all preaching and reduce the teaching of the church to the recital of the exact words of Holy Scripture without note or comment.

Another revealed precept is equally plain: that God appointed his church to be a witnessing body, "the pillar and ground of the truth." This must mean that the

church is to testify constantly to the whole body of revealed precepts and doctrines, and not to parts or fragments only. The direction of this witness-bearing is expressly committed to the presbyters of the church. They are commanded (2 Tim. i. 13) "to hold fast the form of sound words, which they heard" from the apostles, and (Jude 3) "earnestly to contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Again, the presbyters are expressly commanded to provide a succession of teachers of those divine doctrines, and, in doing so, to provide for the fidelity of their successors to this code of truths. 2 Tim. ii. 2: "And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able (*ikanoi*, qualified) to teach others." Indisputably this precept involves the use of some adequate standard of the revealed system of truth for the testing of the sufficient intelligence and orthodoxy of belief in the new men to be entrusted with this divine charge. It is equally clear that when the presbyters admit these to take part in their ministry, the new men virtually covenant to be faithful to that system of truths to which their ordainers are also solemnly bound. The function to which these admit them is the witnessing function. But witnessing to what? Should the new men claim, and the older presbyters bestow, the prerogative of rejecting and disputing the very system of truths to which they are solemnly covenanted, we know not which would be greater, the faithlessness of the ordainers to their trust or the impudent dishonesty of the candidates in seeking the trust that they may betray it. Now, what shall this standard of fitness be? Some reply, it should be the word of God alone. Our previous discussion has shown, in the first place, that if this is to be the standard it

must be the original Greek and Hebrew Scriptures alone, for every translation is but the uninspired translator's *credo*. Thus this claim, made by parties who require of their preachers no knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew tongues, appears little short of ridiculous.

In the second place, experience has taught that, since the death of the inspired men, the Scriptures alone are no longer a sufficient test of fidelity to divine truth, and here we rebut the second objection which has been so insolently obtruded. We do not rest our assertion upon the arrogant assumption of an accuracy and perspicuity of language and style superior to those of the inspired men; we base it upon a set of stubborn historical facts which have emerged, since the inspired men went to heaven, out of the infirmity, spiritual darkness, vain-glory and indwelling sin of unsanctified or partially sanctified men in the visible church. The necessity of a further test in form of a subsequent creed results not from any lack of proper selection or infallible accuracy in the words of the languages of inspiration, but from the human nature and infirmity of mankind in their use of language. Nothing should be more familiar to scholars than the fact so well described by Horace, that they are like the foliage of an evergreen tree. It never, like a deciduous tree, changes all its leaves at one season; but there is a perpetual slow change in the individual leaves, of which a few continually change color, and a few drop off. Such being the nature of human language, it may follow that the word which, at the time the inspired men wrote, was the best and most exact possible symbol of his intended thought will have ceased to be such, after the lapse of generations. Then the subsequent definition becomes proper and necessary, not because of any defect in the inspired words, but because of the fickle infirmity of

men. Thus, when the Authorized Version was issued, "to let" meant "to hinder"; in popular English it now means "to allow" or "permit," almost the opposite idea. "To prevent" signified "to precede"; it now means "to hinder" or "obstruct." But why multiply instances? A more imperative need of subsequent definition has arisen out of the infirmity of human intellect, and the blindness of the human heart which prompted professed believers in Scripture to frame new and discordant concepts of the leading terms of holy writ. Here we are face to face with a large group of stubborn facts, which it is simply childish to attempt to disregard. Let us suppose a court of scriptural presbyters, invested with the duty and responsibility of selecting and ordaining successors. Let us suppose this court professing to employ no other test or standard of fidelity to God's truth than the Scripture itself. Let us suppose a cluster of candidates before them, of whom each and all declare that they believe the Holy Scriptures, and hold all their *ipsissima verba* as their sincere creed. The court points to these express words of Christ in John's Gospel: "I and my Father are one." The court declares for itself that it can honestly see in these words this meaning only—the consubstantial unity and equal divinity of the two persons. But one of the candidates is a Sabellian, and he exclaims, "No, it means that Father and Son are neither of them consubstantial with deity, but two parallel emanations from a central incognoscible divine unit." Another is an Arian; he declares, "No; the Son is but a creature, the earliest and most exalted of creatures, and divine Son of God, only by an act of adoption." The third is a Socinian, and he cries, "No; Christ is only a human being, favored by God, more than any other prophet, with a species of adoption, because of his sanctity and loyalty." Now,

we need not claim that a court of presbyters is the only party which construes the inspired words aright, or that it alone is honest. The court and the Sabellian, the Arian and the Socinian, each declares the same sincere belief in the Holy Scripture. Allow them all to be equally honest, yet this obstinate fact remains, *that they all contradict each other.* Must they yet be all ordained as authorized witnesses to one vital truth, and that by this court, which honestly believes each of the others in fatal error? Where, then, could be the church's testimony for truth?

Again, the court of presbyters points to the term *metanoia*, and asks each candidate what it means. They all declare the Holy Scripture, including this term, is their honest creed. But one is a Pelagian, and he says *metanoia* means simply an outward reform of manners and morals, wrought by the human will. Another is a papist, and he translates *metanoia* "doing penance." Another is an evangelical believer, who asserts that *metanoia* is conversion, a fundamental revolution of the soul as to God, sin, and duty. Yet all say their creed is the Bible! Again, we say, why multiply instances? There is not a cardinal doctrine, nor sacrament of the gospel, concerning which parties claiming to be Christians do not advance explanations discordant with, and destructive of, each other. What is it, then, except a puerile fraud, for men to cry, "The Scripture is the only creed needed"? If a church is to have any honest testimony, something else is needed as a test of harmony in beliefs, a candid explanation in other terms, which, though human, have not been misconstrued.

This view has, in fact, a force so resistless that it is unavoidably obeyed by all the parties which profess to discard it. There is not, and there never has been, a

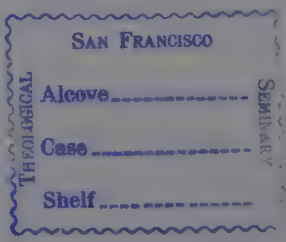
body possessing any organic consistency, as a church or denomination of Christians, which has not had a virtual creed, if unwritten, additional to the mere words of Scripture. And every one of them practically applies its creed for the preservation of its testimony by the exclusion of dissentients. The only real difference between these professedly creedless bodies and the Presbyterian Church is, that their unwritten creeds are less manly, less honest and distinct, and, therefore, more fruitful of discord among themselves, than our candid, published and permanent declaration. And here is one of the legitimate uses of our creed: when we invite men to share with us our responsibility as witnesses to God's truth, they have a right to ask us what the tenor of that witnessing is to be. It is but dishonest child's play to say, "Holy Scripture is the creed to which we witness," when the inquirer knows that every party of heretics and enemies of God's truth is ready to give the same answer. We give a clear and honest reply. We say to the inquirer, Here is our printed creed, which expresses the propositions we believe the Scriptures to teach in carefully chosen words, whose meaning is as unambiguous and as recognized at this time with those who dispute our views as with ourselves. "If these words express your views of the Holy Scripture, you can come and witness with us, happily, honestly, and usefully. If they do not, we neither persecute nor unchurch you, but leave you, under your responsibility to your own God, to select the affiliation which suits you." Such a creed, instead of being a cause of schism, is an *Irenicum*, a source of mutual respect, brotherly love and substantial agreement, amidst minor differences, between the several branches of the church catholic.

Our Confession of Faith is among the fullest and

most detailed creeds of the Protestant world. In many places there is a current tendency towards shorter or very brief creeds. It has been already avowed by us that the creed required of penitent believers seeking our fold should be short, the shortest possible, provided it includes the necessary fundamentals of redemption. But the doctrinal covenant required of teachers and rulers in Christ's church ought to be full and detailed. No man who is still a "babe in the faith," "and such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat," should dare to assume these sacred offices. Our Lord requires of those who fill them a full and thorough knowledge of all the heads of doctrine which make up the system of gospel truth, for two commanding reasons. One is this, he knows that those truths constitute *a system*. In order that they may stand *they* must *stand together*. Each head must support and be reciprocally supported by the other heads, else none of them stand securely; because there is such logical interconnection between all the parts that the rejection of one head introduces logical doubt and difficulty concerning the other heads. If any stone in the arch be loosened, every other stone and the whole structure will become insecure.

The members of this venerable body are too familiar with Christian theology to need any illustration of this result. Now, a babe in Christ may be supposed to hold sincerely a few fundamental truths of redemption, though he doubt or reject other connected heads of doctrine because he is a babe. He does but little connected thinking upon the system. He sees a few things clearly, but the rest dimly. Hence, we may credit him with being both sincere and illogical. But such a one is unfit to direct others in spiritual things. The Christian who is qualified for this is one who has thought widely,

clearly, and consistently. Such a man, if honest, cannot uphold the arch of truth after dropping out any one of its essential stones; he must uphold each and all, or he is not fully trustworthy for upholding the sacred arch. The other reason is that "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine." Therefore, the faithful and competent teacher must employ all the parts of revelation. It is only by declaring to his charge the whole counsel of God that he can stand clear of their blood in the great day of accounts.


SAN FRANCISCO
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Alcove
Case
Shelf

REV. GIVENS B. STRICKLER, D. D., LL. D.

V.

THE NATURE, VALUE, AND SPECIAL UTILITY OF THE CATECHISMS.

BY

Rev. GIVENS B. STRICKLER, D. D., LL. D.,

PROFESSOR IN UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
AT HAMPDEN-SIDNEY, VIRGINIA.

ANALYSIS.

Catechetical teaching.—By question and answer.—Its history.—Scripture instances.—The law.—The Passover.—Ezra.—The Talmud—Jewish catechetical schools.—Josephus.—Jewish schools in later times.—Apostolic age.—Teaching and preaching.—The early Fathers.—Christian catechetical schools.—Dr. Schaff quoted.—Early mission work.—Not used in Dark Ages.—Reformers revived it.—Gave it large place.—Its value felt.—Summary.—Best method of instruction.—Especially religious teaching.—Reasons.—Brings truth clearly before the mind.—Calls attention to it.—Tests knowledge.—Exposes ignorance.—Presents all aspects of truth.—Secures accuracy and completeness.—Aids practical application.—Gains spiritual ends.—Summary.—Yet public preaching of utmost value.—Primal value.—Church leaders also use catechetical method.—Luther.—Calvin.—Zwingli.—Beza.—Knox.—Cranmer.—Ridley.—Usher.—The testimony of enemies confirms.—Romish catechism checked Reformation.—Catechetical instruction defended the Waldenses against Rome.—The Westminster Catechisms are of the highest value.—They are fitted to be so.—Their authors were competent men.—Had full knowledge.—Had other catechisms to aid.—Made with great care and patience.—Several committees acted.—The Larger and Shorter Catechisms.—No other catechisms made with equal care.—Compared with Heidelberg and Romish.—Contain all the essential truths of the gospel.—God.—Sin.—Christ.—Salvation.—Duty.—Death.—Destiny.—Truths stated with great accuracy.—Stated in positive form.—Yet it wards off error.—Doctrine of justification, to illustrate.—Summary.—Objections considered.—Young people cannot understand the teaching.—But may understand much.—Honest effort will master it.—Hard to remember.—Not more so than many secular things learned.—Reasons for using our own catechisms.—If not learned in childhood, likely never learned.—Youth the best time for lasting impressions to be made.—Rain-marks upon stone slab, to illustrate.—Denominational prosperity requires it.—Young people thereby protected against attacks, and able to hold their ground.—Inspiration of Bible.—Decrees.—Predestination.—Election.—Depravity.—Regeneration.—Perseverance.—Save our people from dangers.—The truths thus taught build good and great characters.—This the crown of all.—A closing exhortation.

V.

THE NATURE, VALUE, AND SPECIAL UTILITY OF THE CATECHISMS.

TEACHING, by the catechetical method, has marked the history of the church almost from the beginning down to the present time. A divine warrant for it, if not requirement of it, may be found in such passages of God's word as Deut. vi. 6, 7: "And these words which I command thee this day shall be in thine heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up." And Exodus xii. 26, 27: "And it shall come to pass that when your children shall say to you, What mean ye by this service?" (the service of the passover) "that ye shall say, It is the sacrifice of the Lord's passover, who passed over the houses of the children of Israel in Egypt, when he smote the Egyptians, and delivered our houses." In these instances, in order to give children the full and accurate instruction they needed about the commandments of the Lord referred to, and about the important sacrament instituted in the church in the passover, it was necessary that a number of questions should be asked and answered; and then, that the truth about these and other subjects, once learned, might not be forgotten, but kept ever fresh in the memory, and in constant and influential contact with the mind and heart, it was necessary that it should frequently be reviewed;

that there should be "precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little." Thus, we may say, the catechetical method of instruction was instituted at the very beginning of the Mosaic dispensation.

Not only, however, was it then instituted, but there is evidence that it was afterwards more or less faithfully made use of during at least portions of that long period of time; and that it was most efficient in preserving amongst the Israelites a knowledge of the revelations that, at different times, God made to them. At any rate, just before, and at the dawn of the new dispensation, this mode of teaching was in general use amongst the Jews. Students of the Talmud and of the Targums find that there were then catechetical Bible schools in all the synagogues; and that they were very numerous; sixteen, for instance, in such a city as Tiberias, and more than four hundred in Jerusalem. Some say four hundred and sixty; others four hundred and eighty. They find also that the Jewish teachers attached to these schools so much importance that they were tempted to ascribe their origin to the remotest antiquity; to claim that they were in existence before the flood, and that many of the illustrious men mentioned in the Scriptures—Enoch, Shem, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, Elisha, and a number of others—belonged to them, first as pupils, afterwards as teachers; that these schools constituted a special privilege and a peculiar honor that God had bestowed on his true people in all ages. Of course such claims, to the full extent that they were thus made, have little historical value. Yet they seem to furnish strong evidence that such schools had been in existence in their past history for a long period of time. Josephus claimed that they had been

in existence from the days of Moses, and that in them many of the people had not only been taught the commandments of the Lord, but had learned them so well that they could recite them as accurately as they could give their own names. It seems to be evident, then, that such schools were in existence at our Saviour's advent. Indeed, if the testimony of the rabbis may be relied on, they were not only in existence, but were regarded as an integral part of the religious system of the country, and as essential to its welfare. A number of proverbs were then in existence expressing this view. . It was said that the world continues in existence only by the breath of the children of the schools—the Bible schools; that the true guardians of the country were the teachers of those schools; that if any one would destroy the Jews, he must first destroy their schools; and it was one of their religious laws that no one should live in a place where one of those schools had not been established. There seems thus to be clear evidence that the catechetical method of teaching had marked the history of the church from the beginning of the Mosaic dispensation down to the inauguration of the new.

But there is evidence equally clear that it then passed over into the new. The Jews, as we have seen, were accustomed to this mode of instruction. Those who became Christians had been accustomed to it. No doubt the apostles themselves had learned much that they knew about the Old Testament Scriptures in such schools; and, therefore, when they became disciples, and were commanded by the Saviour to go forth and make known the great truths of the gospel which they had learned from him, we may be sure that they made use of the catechetical method, with which they were already so fa-

miliar, as well as of the public and formal discourse. Traces of this fact seem to be found in the accounts given in the New Testament of their modes of instruction, especially in the distinction sometimes made between teaching and preaching. It is said that our Saviour went about "*teaching*" in their synagogues, and "*preaching*" the gospel of the kingdom; that the apostles ceased not to "*teach*" and to "*preach*" Jesus as the Christ; that on one occasion Paul and Barnabas tarried at Antioch "*teaching*" and "*preaching*" the word of the Lord. Thus a distinction is sometimes made between teaching and preaching; and, no doubt, in such instances, by teaching is meant the catechetical method, the method by question and answer; while by preaching is meant the public formal continuous discourse, to which the same term is still applied. There seems to be no reason to doubt, then, that the catechetical method of teaching was in use under the old dispensation, and that it passed over from the old into the new.

That it was employed under the new by the early fathers, after it was introduced by the apostles, is a fact of church history so familiar that little need be said about it. Baron Bunsen says that "the apostolic church made the school," the Christian school, "the connecting link between itself and the world." Celsus, one of the earliest and most powerful opponents of the church, charged that Christians propagated religion through their schools, and Origen admitted the truth of the charge; but defended the policy of the church in employing that method of propagation, by pointing out the great moral and spiritual benefits the children received in the schools. Dr. Schaff calls attention to the fact that although the early church had no societies for dissemi-

nating the gospel, no Home and Foreign Missionary societies, such as we now have, nevertheless in about three centuries the whole population of the Roman empire was nominally Christianized; and that this great achievement was wrought by the divinely approved plan of "the child-reaching and child-teaching methods" of which the church then made use. It is a familiar fact that there was early established in the church a kind of institution called the catechumenate, or classes of catechumens; that when any of the surrounding pagans wished to come into the church, they were first placed in those classes, and, as a rule, kept there for two or three years; that often the best talent of the church was employed to give them instruction before they were admitted to the enjoyment of the sacraments of the church, and that this was one of the grand instrumentalities by which the church was spread abroad over the world, and by which her conquests were preserved, and converted into the means of future and still greater victories.

When the Dark Ages came on, of course this method of instruction, as well as every other, fell into disuse. Those ages became dark for that very reason; for the darkness was the darkness of religious ignorance. When, however, the Reformation dawned, this mode of teaching was at once revived, and most actively employed in disseminating the gospel. Luther wrote two catechisms; Calvin wrote two; a large number were prepared by others; and they continued to multiply down to the meeting of the Westminster Assembly; and in that Assembly there were twelve men, perhaps fourteen, who had written catechisms and efficiently employed them in the religious training of their people.

Thus, under the old dispensation and under the new, down to the Westminster Assembly, and, indeed, ever

since, the catechetical method of instruction has been employed by the church in doing her great work; and I have furnished the foregoing evidence of the fact that we might see *that this mode of teaching has resting upon it the unqualified endorsement of the church in all ages, especially in her best ages; and that it has been one of the most efficient of all the agencies which God has made use of to secure those blessed results by which the past history of the church has been marked.*[1]

Of course, for such a fact as this there must be a good reason, and that reason it is not difficult to discover: the catechetical mode of teaching has the endorsement of the church in all ages, and has been employed by her great Head as one of the most efficient of all means for accomplishing his work in the world, *because it is the best mode for giving thorough religious instruction.* It is the best for a number of reasons.

One is, that this mode, better than any other, brings before the mind of the pupil the subject that is to be the matter of consideration. It brings up that subject in the form of a question. That question distinctly raises the point to be considered. It invites special attention to it. It secures special attention to it. It fixes special attention on it; and further questions may keep the attention fixed on it until it has been fully explained and fully understood. The other usual method of instruction, the formal continuous discourse, does not so certainly secure these ends, so necessary to thorough work. It may, indeed, as distinctly raise the point to be considered; but it does not so certainly secure attention to it. It may find the mind of the pupil in a passive state, indifferent

[1] For fuller information on this subject, see the larger Encyclopedias, art. "Catechisms," *Princeton Review*, January, 1849; especially Turnbull's *Yale Lectures on the Sunday-School.*

to the subject, or even in opposition to its consideration; but, having no means of ascertaining that fact, may dismiss it long before it has been understood, and so long before the very object of the attempted instruction has been gained. In this important respect, therefore, the catechetical method is much the better for thorough instruction.

2. It is the better method, also, because it makes the student more distinctly conscious of any ignorance of a given subject by which he may be characterized. We may very readily imagine that we are quite well acquainted with a subject until we are closely questioned in regard to it. Augustine once said, in regard to an important point in theology, that he thought he knew all about it until he was subjected to thorough interrogation; but that he then discovered that he knew very little about it. Questions that go down to the very roots of a subject; that pursue it in all its different ramifications out to their remotest terminal points; that present it in all its different aspects, and in all its important relations to other correlated subjects, and in all its practical bearings on religious experience, and character and life, such questions, persevered in as long as may be necessary, are absolutely essential to ascertain whether a subject is fully understood. And if there be any indistinctness of view in reference to it, or any ignorance in regard to it of any kind whatever, these questions will make the student conscious of the fact, and will reveal to him his need of futher information; and will, also, enable the teacher to perceive just where further efforts for his benefit should be made. The public continuous discourse does not possess these advantages to anything like the same degree. It must, indeed, be diligently used, for it is at first the only means we have of arrest-

ing the attention of men; of exciting their interest in the truth; and of bringing them under its influence and within the reach of the church; and, therefore, according to the divine command, we should employ it for these purposes, with all constancy and earnestness. But when those points have been gained, if we would ground men in the knowledge of the truth; establish them in the faith; bring them fully under the sanctifying influence of the great essential doctrines of revelation, and thoroughly equip them for every good work, and for efficiency in communicating those doctrines to others, we must make use of the method now insisted on—the catechetical method—the method by question and answer. This fact is too plain to need further enforcement.

3 This suggests another reason why this is the best method of teaching: it furnishes the best opportunity for *accurate* instruction. Nothing but the truth is of any value anywhere. Nothing but the truth is of any value in science or in philosophy; and, especially, nothing but the truth is of any value in religion. Nothing but the truth can enlighten the mind. Nothing but the truth can awaken the conscience and purge it from dead works to serve the living God. Nothing but the truth can exert a sanctifying influence on the soul. Nothing but the truth can be a lamp to the feet, and a light to the path. Nothing but the truth can we expect the Spirit of truth to employ to transform us into his image who is the truth. What men need, then, is "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." Any admixture of error with the truth is as injurious to the soul as the admixture of poison with wholesome food is to the body. The catechetical method of teaching, it is evident, can secure this end much more perfectly than any other.

By questions and answers alone can the teacher find out

in regard to any given subject what the pupil knows, and what he does not know, and so by that method only can he ascertain what instruction is needed to give a scriptural view of it. The public discourse may give accurate instruction, but it has no means of securing an accurate reception of the instruction. The consequence is that there are multitudes in our churches who have been sitting under that kind of instruction for years—ten, twenty, thirty, forty years—who yet could not accurately define a single subject which, during that long period of time, they have so often heard discussed. If closely questioned, they could not tell what faith is, or repentance, or sin, or, guilt, or justification, or sanctification. Their views on these, and on all other important subjects, are indistinct, incomplete, insufficient, perhaps, for their own safety; certainly insufficient for their comfort and for their efficiency in communicating the truth to others. Thus the public discourse may give accurate instruction, but it has no means of securing an accurate comprehension of it. The catechetical method has. When the truth on any subject has been stated, by questions and answers the teacher may ascertain whether it has been understood, and if it has not been, he may continue those questions and answers until it has been fully mastered. It is clear, then, that this method furnishes by far the best method for securing accurate instruction.

Still another reason why this is the best method is, that it furnishes the best opportunity for an efficient practical application of the truth to the spiritual wants of the learner. By answers to questions, the teacher may find out as accurately as is possible just what is the state of the mind and heart of the pupil, and so find out just what ministrations he needs. He may rightly divide the word of truth. He may give to each one his portion in due

season. He may impress on the attention the warnings of the Scriptures just when he sees they are needed; the threatenings, or the promises, just when he sees they are needed; all their great lessons, just when they are seen to be requisite for the wants of the soul. Thus this method furnishes an opportunity for the most effectual personal application of the truth to each individual that we can possibly enjoy.

Such are some of the reasons why this is the best method of religious instruction. Better than any other method, it secures attention to the subject to be considered, and, more distinctly than any other, makes the learner conscious of his intellectual and spiritual wants; and, besides, furnishes the best opportunity we can have for giving accurate instruction, and for making a seasonable and successful application of the truth to the personal wants of those placed under our care. *And it is in such considerations as these that we find the explanation of the great historical fact that this method of teaching has had the unqualified endorsement of the church in all periods of her history, and that God has made so much use of it in the extension of the kingdom of his Son.*

Of course, in these remarks, I am not to be understood as in the slightest degree depreciating the public preaching of the word. That is absolutely necessary, in the first instance, to arrest the attention of men; to arouse their interest; "to convince of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment to come," and to bring men within the reach of the church, and under the influence of further agencies that may be employed for their spiritual good; and for these purposes the gospel is to be preached with all diligence, "in season and out of season," as the Saviour commands. But when that has been successfully accomplished, if we would establish

them in the knowledge of the truth, and properly train them for future usefulness, in their turn to make the gospel known to others, and efficiently to labor for the establishment of the kingdom into which they have been brought, we must employ the method now insisted on—the catechetical method—that the church has always found most useful for this purpose. This has always been the theory of the great leaders of the church.

But the excellence of this method is not simply a matter of theory. It has in a remarkable way been confirmed by the unmistakable experience of the church. Here a multitude of facts might be mentioned; but there is time for only two or three.

One is that the great leaders of the church have always relied upon it as the best means for the indoctrination of the people and for fitting them for usefulness. Luther made great use of it for this purpose. He lifted up his voice and proclaimed to the world, then awakening out of a long sleep in ignorance and sin, with an energy with which he hardly proclaimed any other truth, "Children are the seed of the church, and for the church's sake Christian schools" (catechetical schools) "must be established and maintained." So decided was he in his views on this subject that he declared that no man was fit to become a minister, or ought to be allowed to enter the sacred office, who had not already proved himself to be a competent catechetical teacher. Calvin held similar views, and Zwingli and Beza, in Switzerland; Knox, in Scotland; Cranmer and Ridley, in England, and Usher, in Ireland. They all relied upon this method of instruction for securing satisfactory and lasting results *as upon no other*.

Another fact is that the excellence of this method is confirmed in a very instructive way by the testimony of

the enemies of evangelical truth. The Council of Trent said "the heretics have chiefly made use of catechisms to corrupt the minds of Christians," thus recognizing and asserting the great success with which they had been employed for instructing the people; and, therefore, that council decreed that this agency should be met and counteracted by a similar agency amongst their own people; and a catechism was prepared under the immediate supervision of the Pope himself, and all the teachers of the church were specifically charged to see to it that it was learned by the people; and from that day down to this that church has not failed to make use of it to retain her children under her control. At the beginning of the Reformation, that church, indeed, observing what advantages were being gained by means of catechisms, addressed itself to similar work with greater energy than ever before, and it is the statement of one of their principal historians that by that means it, in a single generation, arrested the reform movement, and that it has ever since by the same means substantially confined that movement to the geographical limits which it had then reached. In this remarkable manner does the Church of Rome attest the efficiency of this method of instruction.

3. Still another fact, bearing on this subject, is that all the evangelical churches that have maintained their existence in spite of the persecutions to which, at different periods in their history, they have been subjected, have done it by indoctrinating their children in a knowledge of the truth by the catechetical process. In the thirteenth century, for instance, Rome sent an emissary to the Waldenses to ascertain what might be done to win them to its fold. When he returned he reported that by means of catechetical schools the people had been so

thoroughly established in their views of truth that they could not be prevailed on to listen to anything else.

Thus it is demonstrated, both by theory and experience, both by the testimony of the enemies and of the friends of the gospel, that the best means of imparting thorough and lasting religious instruction, and of training the children and youth of the church for future usefulness in her service, is the method which I now advocate —the interlocutory method of question and answer. *If, then, we wish to make use of the best method for accomplishing these great ends amongst our people, this is the method which we must employ.*

And now, in the next place, I shall endeavor to show that in our Catechisms we have already provided, in the best possible form, the matter necessary for this great work. Several facts will make this evident:

1. One is, that our Catechisms were most carefully prepared by men fully competent for the task. It may very truly be said that a body of men more competent for the work could not have been brought together. It was not to them a new work; a work of which they had no knowledge; in which they had no experience. As already stated, a number of them had already, before the Assembly met, prepared catechisms of great excellence for the instruction of their people. These furnished a basis on which to begin their work; and then they had to assist them all the great catechisms of the Reformers, the catechisms of Luther, of Calvin, of Ursinus, and of a number of others. And they did their work most laboriously and carefully. Early in the sessions of the Assembly they appointed a committee, composed of men who were known to have had most experience in such work and to possess most ability for it, to begin the undertaking. Soon afterwards that committee reported;

but its report was not accepted. Another committee, somewhat differently constituted, was appointed. After much consideration, it reported the results of its labors; but still the Assembly was not satisfied. Still another committee was appointed, its composition again somewhat changed. After long deliberation, this committee presented a catechism so acceptable that it was approved almost to the end, when again the Assembly became dissatisfied with the result, and determined to make still another effort to obtain something more perfect. A fourth committee was constituted, its composition again somewhat altered; and that committee was instructed to prepare two catechisms—one larger, for more mature catechumens; the other smaller, for the younger members of families and congregations. That committee reported, and the Assembly adopted the two Catechisms which we now have in our possession. In this way, for about five years, committees of the Assembly, and the Assembly itself, labored on these two little books. Not a sentence was admitted into them until after the most protracted and thorough consideration. Not a word was allowed a place in them until it had been subjected to the closest scrutiny, and had proved itself to be just the right word to express the meaning intended. It is probable that there is not another catechism in existence on which one-tenth of the time and labor and ability and learning was expended that was employed in the production of these two with which God has so highly favored our denomination. They are the work, not of one man, as Luther's and Calvin's; nor of two men, as the Heidelberg Catechism was; nor of four, as was the catechism of the Church of Rome; but they are the product of some five years of the most earnest and prayerful deliberations of the whole Westminster Assembly! If,

then, it is possible for the most conscientious efforts of most competent men to prepare suitable catechisms for the religious instruction of the people, we ought to have them in the little books we now possess.

2. But their value is further seen in the fact that they contain all the essential truths of the gospel. The truths of the Scriptures in regard to God and his attributes, the law and its penalties, sin and its consequences, Christ and his salvation, the Spirit and his work and graces, life and its duties, death and its issues, eternity and its final rewards for the righteous, and its final retribution for the wicked; these, and all other doctrines that must be known and believed in order that men may be saved and fitted for full usefulness in the divine service, these little books contain, as any one may see who gives them a careful examination. They are thus complete manuals of the great fundamental doctrines of divine revelation; we think we have sufficient reason for believing *the most complete in existence*. Not only, however, do they contain all the essential truths of religion, but they contain them in the most accurate form. Although these Catechisms have been in existence two centuries and a half, and although, for that long period of time, they have been subjected to all the severe and decisive tests of the experience of the church, and of the closest scrutiny of her most perfect scholarship, no change in the form of the statement of any one of their great doctrines has ever been made. No suggested change has ever appeared to the church to be of sufficient value to deserve serious consideration! How grateful we should be to the great Head of the church that he has graciously placed in our hands so perfect a means for training up our children and youth in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord!"

3. Another excellence that our Catechisms possess is that they not only thus state the essential truths of religion with so marvellous accuracy, but that they so state them, that, while expressing them clearly in a positive form, they, at the same time, negatively, at every important point, guard against the most serious errors by which, at those points, they have ever been assailed. Almost any answer to the questions of the Catechisms might be taken as an illustration of this fact. Take, for instance, the answer of the Shorter Catechism to the question, "What is justification?" "Justification is an act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone." It is an "*act*," thus guarding against the error that it is a process, sometimes long protracted. An act of "God's *free grace*," guarding against the error that it is by works. "Wherein he pardoneth *all* our sins," guarding against the error that pardon is only partial, some sins being reserved for expiation by penance and the fires of purgatory. "And accepteth us *as* righteous in his sight" —already righteous—guarding against the error that he accepts us only that we may afterwards become righteous. "*Only* for the righteousness of Christ," guarding against the error that our own righteousness forms a part of the ground on which justification is based. "Only for the righteousness of Christ *imputed* to us," guarding against all the errors held, that his righteousness avails for us in some other way. "And received by faith alone," guarding against the error that any other grace is necessary for the purpose. Thus, in this answer, not only is the truth in regard to justification stated with sufficient fulness for the instruction of our children and youth, but it is so stated that, at every

important point, the learner is guarded against every serious error with which at those points it has ever been assaulted. This is an excellence of our Catechisms of great value. It equips our people with scriptural tests, in convenient form, and of easy application, by which every erroneous doctrine with which they may be confronted may be tried.

4. Still another excellence of our Catechisms is, that they not only state the truth in regard to every essential doctrine of God's word, but state it in the form of a *complete system*, every doctrine in its right place and in its right relations to other doctrines. *This is true of no other catechism.* Yet it is a point in their favor of great importance. It is to be remembered that the truths of the Scriptures, although scattered hither and thither over their pages without regard to scientific order, and although all that is taught on any important subject cannot be found, perhaps, in any one passage, but must be found in a number of different and widely-separated passages, nevertheless those truths, when collected out of the book, and brought together, and rightly adjusted one to another, form a system of truth, a divine system, more harmonious and perfect than any other that was ever excogitated by human learning and genius. It is also to be remembered that no truth can be fully understood and appreciated until it is seen, not only in its own light, but in the light of all the other truths to which it stands related. The death of Jesus of Nazareth, for instance, looked at only in itself, would have been regarded as a very insignificant event. It would have been noticed only for a moment by only a few as the pitiable fate of a poor Jewish peasant of extraordinary, but most visionary, pretensions, under the deserved penalty of violated law. But when looked at, not in itself alone, but in the light

of all correlated truths, how different does it appear! So of all the essential truths of religion. It is a great excellence of our Catechisms, then, that they not only contain the fundamental doctrines of revelation, but that they present them in the form of a system, in which every truth can be contemplated, not only in its own light, but in the additional, and clearer, and only sufficient light of all correlated truths; and thus can be so seen as to be most thoroughly understood and most fully appreciated.

Such is only an imperfect exhibition of the merits of our Catechisms. Enough has been said, however, I trust, to make it plain that in them we have furnished to our hands, in the best possible form, the matter necessary to indoctrinate our people with the great truths of religion by that process which has received the approbation of God's people in all the past, and which God has always so much blessed.

1. It has been objected to these Catechisms, indeed, that it is difficult for young people to understand them; and, no doubt, this is true. *But it is by no means impossible;* and, therefore, the only question is, are the truths which they contain worth the effort necessary to acquire them? Human ability has never yet succeeded in stating them correctly in an easier form. Unless our young people, then, master them in this form, they must remain ignorant of them. Is that alternative, with all its consequences, to be preferred to the labor necessary to acquire them? Besides, even if in early life they do not fully understand them, they may readily learn enough abundantly to compensate them for all the time and effort they may expend on them; and clearer views will certainly come later.

2. It is also objected to these Catechisms that it is diffi-

cult to remember them; and no doubt that, too, is true. But it is not more difficult than to remember a number of lessons taught in our secular schools, which we require our children to remember, and which they must remember if they would be fitted for the secular duties of life. Moreover, memory needs training. What better training can be given it than by storing up in it those great facts and truths of God's word that are "able to make them wise unto salvation"? Alas! for the children whose parents excuse them from so necessary and valuable a study on grounds so trivial!

But now, in conclusion, let me tax your patience long enough briefly to point out some reasons why we should use these Catechisms for the great purpose for which they were intended and for which they are so eminently suited:

1. Unless they are learned in childhood and youth, the strong probability is that they will never be learned at all. Not one in five hundred of our people, perhaps, learns them later in life. They must be learned, then, early in life, or never. Are we willing for the latter alternative? Are we willing that our children shall never *accurately* know the great truths of religion? Are we willing that they shall never accurately know what is meant by such doctrines as faith, and repentance, and justification, and sanctification? Would that be wise? Would that be safe?

2. We cannot too early impress the great truths of the Catechisms on their minds and hearts. We should never forget that in childhood and youth the soul is most susceptible of deep and lasting impressions. In our great museums we sometimes see stone slabs with the marks of raindrops on them that fell before man had any existence, and the impressions of the feet of tiny birds that

walked over them when time was yet young. The explanation is, that those slabs were once in a formative state, so soft that objects so light would thus impress them; and then, as time passed by, those slabs, with those impressions on them, hardened into the solid rock; and thus those impressions became as enduring as the slabs themselves are. So, in childhood and youth, the souls of our children are most susceptible of impressions for good or evil; and then, as the years elapse, those souls, with those impressions on them, indurate; and thus those impressions become as lasting, as everlasting, it may be, as the souls themselves. How important it is, then, that these earliest and most enduring impressions should be made in behalf of right and truth and God by the inculcation of the great truths of our Catechisms! How important that those truths should, in the very beginning of their histories, be laid down deep around the very roots of their young natures, that up out of them their future characters may grow, and that by them their future lives may be determined and controlled!

3. It is necessary to our success as a denomination that our Catechisms be intelligently and faithfully taught. Our doctrines are constantly and bitterly assailed. In much of the literature of the day, especially in that kind which, unfortunately, our children too much read, they are caricatured as severe, harsh, unreasonable, antiquated; as belonging to a remote and ignorant past; as being entirely out of harmony with the progress that has been made in better views of the benevolence, of the divine nature, of the dignity of man, and of the vastness and freeness of redeeming love. Multitudes of our people do not know how to meet these assaults. They do not know what to say in answer to the attacks

that are made on the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures; the absolute sovereignty of God; the doctrine of the divine decrees; of predestination and election; of the total depravity of the human race; of the necessity of the regeneration of the Spirit, and of the perseverance of the saints. Those who make these assaults see that they do not know what to say; and this fact invites and provokes additional assaults. Nor is this the only and the worst consequence. Seeing that so many of our people do not know how to defend the doctrines which we hold, they have not that respect for us, as a denomination, that is necessary to give us such influence over them, and over the world, as we must have, if we would win them to our views, and do the work amongst them that our Saviour requires at our hands. Every intelligent observer in our churches must see that this is true to a most painful extent. It has been true long enough. It is high time that this state of things were brought to an end; and I trust that as one result of these celebrations of the formation of our Standards our ministers and elders and deacons and intelligent members will arouse themselves, and by a proper inculcation of our doctrines *bring it to an end!* Why cannot the ministers and officers in our denomination so instruct our people as to these great doctrines, that in every church there shall be a number, at least, who shall know how to maintain them against any of the popular assaults that are so frequently made upon them? We shall never succeed as we may and ought until this is done.

4. We should diligently teach the doctrines of our Catechisms, because if faithfully inculcated they will do in the future what they have already so often done in the past. In former years they have made great and good churches—churches as great and good as any the world

has yet seen. They have made great and good denominations—denominations as great and good as any that have yet marked the world's history. They have made great and good men and women—men and women as great and good as any with which God has yet blessed the human race. They have purified and elevated and ennobled all the institutions of the world—the family, the state, the church. They have brought to bear upon them as beneficent an influence as any to which they have ever been subjected. *No system of doctrines has such a history for good as ours has.* Search and see. But what these doctrines have done in the past they may do again in the future. Let us teach them, then, as we ought, and our "Zion will arise, and shine, her light having come," and God will honor us with a noble part in disseminating his truth, and in taking this poor apostate world captive, and in bringing it to the Saviour's feet, and laying it down there, the splendid trophy of his redeeming grace!

REV. EUGENE DANIEL, D. D.

VI.

CHURCH POLITY AND WORSHIP--EMPHASIZING THEIR RELATION TO WORSHIP.

BY

REV. EUGENE DANIEL, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, RALEIGH, N. C.

ANALYSIS.

Introductory references to Dr. B. M. Palmer.—The topic stated as given.—This theme covers polity and worship and their underlying doctrine.—The sufficiency and sovereignty of God the unifying principle of the Confession and Catechisms, the Form of Government and the Directory of Worship.—The conception of God in the Confession and Catechisms.—The fundamental principle of church government the sufficiency and sovereignty of God in Christ.—Christ the alone King and Head.—This in opposition to the papacy and to Erastianism.—This sovereignty of Christ variously realized.—In his gathering into one his elect.—In his ordaining the Bible as the alone law of the kingdom.—In his prescribing therein a government, in the hands of officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.—In his making things not commanded forbidden.—Doctrine of "circumstances."—This sovereignty further realized in worship.—Christ the Master of all assemblies.—Ordains all sacraments and ordinances.—Inspirer of prayer and praise.—Author of all effectual preaching.—His Spirit the only Vicegerent.—Sovereignty finally realized in subduing all enemies, in destroying death, in coming in glory, in reigning as Theanthropos forever.—Corollaries.—First, beware of that taproot of sorrows, complications of church and state.—Second, God himself, by his Spirit armed with his word, and by his amazing providence, had inwrought his sufficiency and sovereignty into the Westminster Standards.—Doctrine, polity and worship one sublime doxology.

VI.

CHURCH POLITY AND WORSHIP—EMPHASIZING THEIR RELATION TO DOCTRINE.

MODERATOR, FATHERS AND BRETHREN OF THE ASSEMBLY: You will lend me your sympathy when I say that I find the responsibility of this hour almost crushingly oppressive. It were a matter of grave import, at any time and under any circumstances, to stand in this historic place, to look into the faces now upturned to mine, and to open the lips in this venerable presence. But beyond these not unusual considerations, there are others of moment connected with the discharge of the duty of the hour, to which I may briefly advert.

A few weeks ago there fell beneath my eye the programme of exercises in celebration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Westminster Assembly. Glancing over it I saw that a very prominent topic of discussion had been assigned to that eminent and honored servant of the church, the Rev. Dr. B. M. Palmer, and, to my unfeigned astonishment, that my own name had been written beneath his as that of his alternate. I had just had time to congratulate myself that the kindness thus shown me by your Committee of Arrangements might be gratefully accepted without any burden of responsibility, when the thought of these easy honors was quickly dispelled by the receipt of a letter from Dr. Palmer, which was full of sadness for myself and of disappointment for you. The distinguished principal stated that it would be impossible for him to attend this meeting of the Gene-

ral Assembly; that his vision was so indistinct as to make it inexpedient for him to prepare the paper expected of him; that he desired this summer to make one last effort to recover his failing eyesight, and that if this should not be successful, he would resign himself to the will of the Lord, and preach on in the dark until it should please God to open his eyes "to the celestial glories of the upper day." Upon receiving this letter I at once wrote to Dr. Palmer, entreating him to prepare the address by dictation, and assuring him that I would covet no higher honor than that of reading it in his name. But there came a quick response, again asking that I should relieve the principal of the whole responsibility of the address. So positive was the declinature, couched in language of that gracious encouragement to myself which has always characterized this eminent man in his dealings with his younger brethren in the ministry, that with "fear and trembling" I consented to place my neck beneath the yoke intended for him, sorrowing, most of all, that we must to-day miss the majesty of his lofty thought, nor have our souls uplifted and thrilled by the sound of his eloquent voice.

The subject assigned to Dr. Palmer as principal, and coming to me as his alternate, is given in these words, "Church Polity and Worship—Emphasizing their Relation to Doctrine."

After careful reflection I have concluded that it is expected of me not to discuss in detail the practical operations of church government, nor the particular ordinances of divine worship, but rather, to discover and signalize those general principles which the Westminster Assembly laid as the foundation stones of the whole polity and worship of the church of God, and especially, to hold up to view any one cardinal scriptural truth which may

bind all the parts of our Standards together in organic unity. I believe that the whole system of doctrine, of polity, and of worship is one. The single proposition which I shall endeavor to illustrate and enforce is this: The pervading and unifying doctrine of the Westminster Standards is that of the sufficiency and sovereignty of God, whose good pleasure is the source of the church's being, whose will is her law, and whose glory is her end.

I. Adverting briefly to the Confession of Faith: The able and distinguished theologian who has preceded me, with a power of analysis and a force of statement peculiarly his own, has already sufficiently emphasized the theocentric character of that venerable symbol. I shall, therefore, content myself with simply calling attention to its language of wonderful sublimity, wherein it asserts, with almost superhuman power, the conception of God enshrined within the reverent souls of those men whose work we honor now after these two hundred and fifty years. Taking the shoes from off our feet and bowing the heart as in solemn worship, let us hear these divines as, with Bible in hand, they point to the sacred page and tell us what is God: "There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection; a most pure Spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions; immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty; most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute; working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous will, for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal, most just and terrible in his judgments, hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty."

"God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness in and of himself, and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting his own glory in, by, with, and upon them; he is the alone Fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom are all things; and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth. In his sight all things are open and manifest; his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature, so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain. He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands. To him is due from angels and men and every other creature whatsoever worship, service, or obedience he is pleased to require of them."

"God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy Providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy." And so speak the Catechisms: "God is a Spirit, in and of himself infinite in being, glory, blessedness, and perfection; all-sufficient, eternal, unchangeable, incomprehensible, everywhere present, almighty, knowing all things, most wise, most holy, most just, most merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth." The climax of conciseness is attained in that reputed adoring outburst of Gillespie's prayerful soul: "O thou, who art a Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in thy being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth."

Where was ever found as noble a conception of God in the minds of uninspired men? Whenever the lovers of all that is rich and stately in the liturgies of other churches would press upon us their claims of admiration, may we not point to our own Standards, and ask where, in any tongue, may be purer or loftier words than these in which the best scholarship of the best period of English literature exalts Almighty God? And not only here in these quotations is this all-sufficiency of the one supreme Jehovah expressed. This is the heart and soul of every cardinal doctrine taught. The Bible is of value because it is the word of the infallible God. Sin is awful because it is defection from God. The highest end of Jesus Christ's life and death is the conservation of the glory of God. "The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." "Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law of God." Effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit. Justification and adoption are acts, and sanctification is the work of God's free grace. The full happiness of the redeemed consists in being "made perfectly blessed in the full enjoying of God to all eternity." Prayer must be "the offering up of our desires unto God, for things agreeable to his will." Unbelief in God, God's word, God's Son, God's prescribed way of salvation, will condemn the soul through all the ages; but to awaken in God's likeness will be supernal and unending joy. Thus in the doctrinal Standards of the Westminster Assembly, God is everywhere, first, midst, last, and without end.

II. Passing out of the realm of doctrine into the domain of church government and worship, it is easy to see that here also God's sovereignty is the solid basis of

all scriptural, ecclesiastical polity. To this end does God bow the heavens and come down to earth in the second Person of the adorable Trinity, that he may be, not only the Saviour, but also the ruler, of the church. The chief corner-stone in the system of government proclaimed by the Westminster Assembly, and known as Presbyterian, is the vital and all-comprehensive truth that God incarnate, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the alone King and Head of the church. "It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest and King; the Head and Saviour of his church; the heir of all things and judge of the world." . . . "The Son of God, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature," etc. . . . "Which Person is very God and very man, and yet one Christ, the only mediator between God and man." . . . "On the third day he arose from the dead, with the same body in which he suffered; with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of the Father, making intercession; and shall return to judge men and angels at the end of the world." So spake the Assembly through the Confession. And so, in that Assembly, rang out through the reports on church government such mighty praise to Christ as this:

"Jesus Christ, upon whose shoulders the government is, whose name is called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace; of the increase of whose government and peace there shall be no end; who sits upon the throne of his father, David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it, with judgment and justice, from henceforth, even

forever; having all power given unto him in heaven and in earth by the Father, who raised him from the dead and set him on his own right hand, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come, and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all; he being ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things, received gifts for his church, and gave all officers necessary for the edification of his church and for the perfecting of the saints." "This Jesus Christ is the Mediator, the sole Priest, Prophet, King, Saviour, and Head of the church, and contains in himself, by way of eminency, all the officers in his church." Thus did these godly divines make Jesus the sole Head and King in Zion. Thus did they "bring forth the royal diadem and crown him Lord of all."

Looking backward from the eminence occupied by ourselves on this fifth jubilee of that Assembly, we ask: Could this simple truism of the sovereignty of Jesus Christ over his church ever have been denied? Could men ever have dreamed that Zion should be under any other Lord? Could it require any courage to proclaim this first and simplest principle of ecclesiastical polity? Ah! to *us*, here and now, it all seems simple, as the very alphabet of church government; but to those men, then and there, it was the enunciation of a principle that had been buried for centuries; and the declaration was a declaration of *war* against two of the mightiest usurpers that ever thrust themselves upon the Redeemer's throne. The one of these was Cæsar; the other was papal Rome.

More than thirteen hundred years had dragged their tedious length along since the reputed conversion of

Constantine. The pagan religion of Rome had always been in close and inseparable connection with the government of the state. The polytheism of that time, not without its varied poetical charms, had interlinked itself with the whole life of the people. Imaginary gods swept through the air, walked the groves, arose from the ocean, whispered in the breeze, thundered in the storm, shut or opened the caves of the winds, and made their homes on the loftiest mountains. They were worshipped at the firesides, consulted in matters of business, inquired of in judicial proceedings, and were absolutely identified with all affairs of state. By an insidious and easy transformation, the alleged conversion of the head of paganism effects a transition into an adulterous connection of church and state; and then, the Iliad of long and unutterable woes! Constantine becomes the head of the church. History sweeps on. The direful precedent is followed with fatal facility. The church lives on, often more dead than alive, in the unholy union. King after king claims to sit in the place of Jesus Christ, and Henry VIII. does not scruple to declare himself the Supreme Head of the Church in England. Even the virtuous and amiable Edward assumes the same high and awful title. Mary Tudor and Elizabeth, appalled by the thunders of John Knox, hesitate as to the title, but dare the deed. James gladly receives the decision of the twelve judges of the Star Chamber: "The king, having the supreme ecclesiastical power, can, without Parliament, make orders and constitutions for church government." Charles even more audaciously would wear the crown of the Redeemer. When, therefore, the doctrine of the sole kingship and headship of Christ is at last clearly and authoritatively declared, kings may read the doom of civil despotism over the church. The outwork-

ing of this mighty principle will be slow, as its burial out of human sight was endured for a millennium; but even if a new world must be required for its full development, that principle, so full of God's energy, shall prevail. The Lamb's wife will yet walk the earth free of Cæsar's chain.

The papacy, the other usurper, was no less ancient; was, possibly, even more powerful. The false idea of an enforced outward, organized unity of the church, with its visible earthly head, looms before us in distinct outline, even in the third century of the Christian era. It is but a little later until the Roman prelate demands to be recognized as the centre of this unscriptural Catholic unity. The error takes root and grows until the pontiff arrogantly calls himself the Vicar of Jesus Christ, claims unlimited power, and sitting as God, boasts himself that he is God. A thousand years elapse, and still the monstrous usurpation grows more powerful and ever more corrupt. Kings bow the knee to this Dagon, or stand shivering at his door to receive absolution from his lips, as from Jesus Christ himself. He not only lords it over God's heritage, but sways the sceptre over the bowed heads of the kings and princes of the earth. The worn and wasted remnant that have not bowed the knee, have been crying for centuries, "O Lord, how long?" And now the sword of the Spirit is unsheathed. The truth of God is hewing its way, right and left, and marching to a grand consummation, in opposition to all the lightnings and thunders of the Vatican. And here, by this learned and powerful body of divines, the crown rights of King Jesus are boldly proclaimed, and all Rome is defied. Sternly the God-fearing Assembly, under oath to be true to its convictions, points to its blood-stained banner and bids the pontiff read: "The Lord

Jesus Christ is the only King, the only Head in Zion."

The leaven of this vital and all-embracing truth wrought mightily in every direction, and gave shape to all the subordinate principles embraced in the Assembly's development of the polity of the church. To the exhibition of the various and stupendous ways in which this one cardinal doctrine of Christ's sovereignty was drawn into realization, let me now proceed to invite your attention.

1. The sovereign Jesus himself gathers his elect into the one body of which he is the Head. "The catholic, or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that has been, are, or shall be, gathered into one, under Christ, the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." "The visible church consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children, and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ." "Unto this catholic visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life to the end of the world; and doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto." The King of Glory finds those whom the Father hath given him, carnal, sold under sin, in awful rebellion against God and his Christ. These he subdues into willing subjects; yet, only by love, and through the effectual and irresistible workings of the Holy Ghost sent forth to apply the word of God. Thus the king pierces to the dividing asunder of the joints and marrow, and soul and spirit, and becomes a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Sending the rod of his strength out of Zion, he rules in the midst of his

enemies; makes his people willing in the day of his power, in the beauties of holiness, and more than the womb of the morning; he drinks of the brook in the way and lifts up the head. Set as a king upon the holy hill of Zion, he exultingly exclaims, "I will declare the decree; the Lord said unto me, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession'" In the view of the Westminster Assembly, here was the true bond of Christian union; not rigid and compulsory conformity to a body bound hand and foot in the fetters of cast-iron formalism, nor allegiance to a corrupt or a capricious and tyrannical monarchy, nor blind and superstitious devotion to the person, and submission to the will of papal or prelatic despot, but the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, as the whole body gathered into one by the will of its living Head, joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase to the edifying of itself in love, thus growing up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ.

2. This sovereignty is also realized in the fact that, to this body, thus gathered into one, the King gives his own word as the exclusive law of being, of belief, and of daily life. The Westminster Assembly believed that the Bible was the very word of God, sufficient and perspicuous; its teachings and commandments to be received on the authority of the King, loyalty to whom required implicit faith and prompt and unquestioning obedience just so soon as the true meaning of the word could be ascertained. The "thus saith the Lord" was to be decisive and final. Before this rule of faith and practice the fancies of a supposed inward revelation were

vain, and the traditions of the church itself were divested of power to bind the conscience. The supremacy and sovereignty of Zion's King were to be made real to her through the very words of the Holy Ghost, the only Vicegerent of his Majesty sent to earth. The members of the Assembly seated themselves as if at the very foot of the throne, and within the shadow of a self-imposed oath, read to them afresh every week, promising and vowing in the presence of the Almighty God to maintain nothing in point of doctrine but what they believed to be most agreeable to the word of God. "The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or, by good and necessary consequence, may be deduced from Scripture, unto which nothing is at any time to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit or traditions of men." "The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself." "The Supreme Judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined . . . can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture." The conscience is to be left "free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his word, or beside it, in faith or worship." The King's own "Himself hath said it" is the exclusive rule, positive and negative. The Assembly uncovers and holds up to view the weighty principle, long afterward used so powerfully by our own Dr. Thornwell in his celebrated argument with the distinguished theologian of Princeton, that, whether in faith, government or worship, the substantial article or action, if not expressly commanded, is forbidden. Yet, even here the wisdom and conservatism of the Assembly exhibit themselves in the explanatory, if not qualifying, statement: "Never-

theless . . . there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the word, which are always to be observed." These "circumstances," as Gillespie (quoted by Girardeau) shows, must be (1), "only circumstances; no substantial part; no sacred, significant thing;" (2), "must be such things as are not determinable by Scripture;" (3), "must be accompanied with some good reason and warrant given for the satisfaction of tender consciences." Or, as Dr. Thornwell, and after him Dr. Peck, clearly states: "Circumstances are those concomitants of an action without which it cannot be done at all, or cannot be done *with decency and decorum*." Precisely what discretion is implied in the phrase I have italicized, this is not the place, nor am I the person, accurately to determine. It seems sufficient to state the principles clearly known, and to urge that their observance must stand or fall with the church's loyalty to her living Lord. Their application at that day wrought wonders, and turned the world in the church upside down. Burdensome liturgies, imposed by human authority and ministering to human indolence and ignorance, were banished. The whole hierarchy of archbishops, bishops, chancellors, commissaries, deans, deans and chapters, archdeacons, priests, acolytes, trembled and tottered as the King spake through his word. The paraphernalia of will-worship and of holy vestments, which from the days of Elizabeth, and as far back as Edward, had so grieved the simple Puritan faith, were "determined to be taken away." The King, through his servants and with the sword of the Spirit, hewed them down and proclaimed with all authority: "God is

a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." The Bible was the sole law of the kingdom.

3. Shall we now advance a step further and say: This sovereignty of Christ is also realized in the fact that, in the Scriptures given by the King to his church, he hath appointed for her "a government," in the hands of officers chosen and qualified by himself and "distinct from the civil magistrate." Out of this complex proposition, I shall briefly educe three of its important elements.

(1), The Westminster Assembly believed that there is a form of government for the church prescribed in the word of God. As we well know, the Assembly was composed of Presbyterians, Independents, and Erastians. The first class, especially those from Scotland, avowed and urged the principle. The second, while at times apparently lax in the application of it, yet steadily united in appeals to it for the defence of their peculiar tenets. The third class, basing its arguments largely upon extraneous considerations, yet also urged, with persistency and with ability, the relation between the Jewish and Christian churches, and the combined civil and ecclesiastical polity of the one as authority for the same combination in the government of the other. Upon the whole, the prevailing view of the Assembly was that Christ hath revealed for his church, in his word, a government.

(2), But when the question arose, what is this scriptural government? then, as might have been anticipated, came "the battle of the giants." Even in expectancy of this inevitable issue, long before it came, its overshadowing influence was felt. The debate of those days when this question was pending is historic. We read it, not without sorrow over human weakness, but far more

with profound recognition of the conscientiousness and the ability which it evoked. Those men were under oath to be true to God's word. For the greater part, they were staunch to their convictions; and for this we shall forever honor them.

It was a foregone conclusion that the government announced should be Presbyterian, *i. e.*, simply by elders of the people; *in primo actu*, the power residing in the whole church as the life is in the whole body, but the exercise of the power being in the hands of elders called of Jesus Christ, the King, and invested by him with authority to rule under the law, which it is theirs not to make, but to declare and to enforce. The power of the whole being in every part, and over the power of every part, is realized through representative Assemblies, each accountable to Jesus Christ, the only King.

I have said that it was a foregone conclusion that Presbyterianism should be the outcome of that Assembly. The reason is plain. The Reformers had bent themselves to the study of the Bible, and with amazing coincidence they had come to a very common conclusion. Having examined the Scriptures with an honesty of heart and a culture of mind and a devoutness of soul never surpassed, the Reformers most generally had announced that the government of the apostolic church was Presbyterian. Even the Independents in the Assembly at times came to the very point of "accommodation" with this view, and it will be evident that their refusal at last was due more to their relation to Cromwell and to the Parliament, and their dread of an *imperium in imperio*, than to any other cause. Back of their hesitancy as to church courts was ever the influence of considerations growing out of the relations of church and state. From the Reformers in Holland, in Switzerland, and above all, in

Scotland, came the uniform result of scriptural investigation, and the Assembly but voiced the general views when it declared that Presbyterianism was the scriptural government of the church. From this side of the arc the pendulum started when it swung out across the centuries of apostasy and corruption, and to this side must it swing back again. I do not mean to affirm that the Westminster Assembly gave, in their fullest development, the principles involved in the doctrine of the eldership. It did give them in essential germinal completeness. More than two hundred years afterward, a son of our own church seized them, enstamped the image and engraved the superscription of his own sanctified genius upon them. Whoever, to-day, would see them in the blazing light of "logic on fire" may read James Henley Thornwell!

(3), But the Coryphæus over this whole company of debated propositions was this: the government of the church is in the hands of officers *distinct from the civil magistrate.* This brings us into the very thickest of the fray. The Assembly affirms the autonomy of the church under the only King; the world, the flesh, and the devil deny it.

I cannot adequately describe that long, patient, laborious contest. Time would fail to tell how the work of the Assembly was hindered and opposed by a few of its own body within, by the Parliament without, and by the collusion of both. When at last, in spite of all obstacles and hindrances, the Assembly's work was done, and submitted to the very body which had commanded its performance, that body delayed action. Again and again the Assembly urged it by respectful and dignified petition, and finally by representatives personally appearing before the Commons and mildly

but firmly insisting. This appearance was stigmatized by the House as a "breach of privilege." And then came a shameful spectacle, as the deputies of the Commons, appointed for the purpose, stood on the floor of the Assembly, and the civil power rebuked the church in language of stinging insult and arrogant domination, demanding that the Assembly set itself afresh to answer certain questions regarding the *jus divinum* of the church—questions the real object of which seemed to be to delay and ultimately defeat the Assembly's work. Says Dr. Mitchell in the Baird Lectures: "They had been threatened with a *præmunire* by the king before they began their work. They were now told by the deputies of that House whom they had risked so much to serve that they had incurred that penalty. They must have listened with pain to the speeches, but they listened in silence. No angry word escaped them. No course of action was hastily resolved on. They read the paper which the deputies had left, and quietly adjourned for the day." Sublimely calm, they patiently resumed their work. Observing a day of fasting and prayer, they took up the queries propounded and laboriously entered upon their discussion. The memorable address of Lord Warriston, at this juncture, rang out as if the very spirit of all the Covenanters had found in him a tongue. May I quote his words as given by Mitchell? Said he:

"Sir, all Christians are bound to give a testimony to everie truth when they ar called to it; but ye ar the immediat servants of the Most High—Christ's *precones* and heralds, whose propper function is to proclaim his name, preserve his offices, and assert his rights. Christ has had many testimonies given to his prophetical and priestly office by the pleading and suffering of his

saincts; and in thir latter dayes he seems to require the samyne unto his kingly office. A king loves a testimony to his crowne best of any, as that w^ch^ is tenderest to him; and confessors or martyres for Christ's crowne ar the most royal and most stately of any state martyrs; for although Christ's kingdome be not of this world, and his servants did not fight therefor when he wes to suffer, yet it is in this world, and for this end was he born. And to this end that we may give a testimony to this truth amongst others were wee born, nor should we be ashamed of it or deny it, but confesse and avouche it by pleading, doing, and suffering for it, even in this generation, w^ch^ seems most to oppose it and y^r^ by require a seasonable testimony." . . . "Sir, ye are often desired to remember the bounds of your commission from man and not to exceed the samen; I am confident you will make as much conscience not to be deficient in the discharge of your commission from Christ. But now, sir, ye have a commission from God and man (for the w^ch^ ye have reason to thank God and the Parliament) to discuss the truth that Christ is a king and hes a kingdome in the externall government of his church, and that he hes set doun the lawes and offices and other substantialls y^e^ of. Wee must not now before men mince, hold up, conceal, prudentially wave anything necessary for this testimony, . . . not quit a hoofe, or edge away an hemme of Christ's robe royal." . . . "And now, sir, seeing the quæries ar before you, I am confident that whatsoever diversity of opinions may be amongst you in any particular, yee will all look to and hold out the maine, Christ's kingdome distinct from the kingdomes of this earth, and that he hes and might appoint the government of his own house and should rule the samen; and that none of this Assembly, even for the gaining

their desires in all the poynts of difference, would by y^r silence, concealment, and connivance weaken, communicat, or sell any part of this fundimentall truth, this sovereign interest of Christ, and that ye will all concurre to demonstrate the samen by clear passages of Scripture, necessarie consequences y^r fra, w^ch can no more be denyed or esteemed cold nor the letter itself, and by the universall constant practice of the apostles, w^ch ar as cleare rules unto us as any human lawes, inferences, and practises ar, or can be brought for any civile priviledges.''

The success of the Assembly in its labors to secure the autonomy of the church and the crown rights of the king was incomplete for the time, but was destined to be full. Compelled to admit a right of final appeal (in cases of discipline) to a parliamentary commission, we realize that the battle was then only partially won. But we realize, as well, that the Assembly imbedded in its Constitution those principles which were left lying as dynamite beneath the grim Castle of Politico-Ecclesiasticism, requiring only time to upheave and demolish it. The doctrine that ''God alone is Lord of the conscience,'' and that Christ's government of his kingdom is in himself, and in those alone whom he hath appointed, was to march on, conquering and to conquer. It flamed out in Scotland in 1732, and again in 1752. Just two hundred years after the Assembly it burst forth with expanded glory, when in Scotland, in 1843, the Free Church repudiated all connection with the state, and her four hundred ministers left manses, glebes and edifices, and boldly marched forth to be God's freemen. But the expansiveness of the principle required a new world for its development. In 1788, here in America, the remaining traces of Erastianism were eradicated from the Standards,

and God's church, cutting the tentacle of the octopus which for fifteen hundred years had bound and smothered her, finally stood forth the unfettered bride of Christ. The sublime sense of the immediate responsibility to Jesus Christ as the alone Lord of the conscience, and the love, not only of religious, but of civil freedom, which it invariably fosters, burned in the Scotch-Irish ruling elders so largely composing the men of Mecklenburg, whose Declaration of Independence near this very spot will be remembered as long as North Carolinians live to love and honor the history of their State.

But I must not venture into this broad domain which has been reserved for an address yet to come, but must hasten to say—

4. The Westminster Assembly realized the sovereignty of Christ over his church, not only in polity, but also in worship

As founded by our Lord and his apostles, the worship of the church partook of the simplicity of its government. Presbyterian in organism, its services of worship were such as plain elders of the people, ruling and teaching, might conduct and administer. So early as the second century, prelacy, by degrees, substituted Presbytery, and more and more the will of the king, as the master of assemblies and ordinances was ignored. Human inventions now take the place of divine institutions. The influx of influences of court custom becomes painfully manifest as soon as (about 323 A. D.) the Roman emperor becomes practically the earthly head of the Christian church; and the significant fact is that the corruptions of worship obtaining under Constantine, and for centuries afterward, have almost their counterpart in the formalism, the ritualism, the scenic splendor and pageantry, everywhere prevalent at the time of the Reforma-

tion. The tap-root of it all was the unholy alliance of church and state; that is to say, of the church and the world. The Reformers found the way to a return to apostolic simplicity of worship under Jesus, the King, ever barred by the earthly monarch and his court. They protested against the countless images, fasts, feasts, feast days, monasteries, nunneries, vestments, and set liturgies, as all "beside" the things commanded by the King. So intolerable had the burden become, and so thoroughly stifling to all spirituality the atmosphere by which public services were surrounded, that, whatever else the Assembly may have been uncertain about, they were avowedly resolved, as Parliament had already decided, that the countless uncommanded things of humanly imposed liturgical worship should be substituted by a simple directory, all of whose substantive provisions should be either expressly enjoined by the Head and Sovereign of the church in his word, or, by good and necessary consequence, be deducible from it. Accordingly, the Assembly, with comparatively little debate, and with great concurrence of all parties, adopted the Directory of Worship.

It would be impossible, here and now, to enter into any detailed comparison between that Directory and the liturgy it substituted. Its chief characteristics are simplicity, spirituality, freedom from the inventions of man, and unswerving loyalty to the commands of Christ the King. It makes Jesus the Master of all assemblies. The Sabbath is his, the Lord's day. Himself is to preside over every meeting of his saints, and his Spirit is to be invoked as the author of all true prayer and the inspirer of all acceptable praise. Most prominently did the Assembly elevate the preaching of the word, which had so long been slighted and even despised. The gos-

pel ministry was to proclaim the King's law and promulgate the King's gospel, ever with laborious preparation of head and heart and spiritually aroused conscience; and for all efficiency and power they were to hang dependent upon the King's own Spirit. The sacraments, divested of former superstitions, were no more to be worshipped, but were to be administered reverently, with decency and with order; and all power and efficiency were to be found, "not from any virtue in them nor in him that did administer them, but only by the blessing of Christ and the working of his Spirit."

If the Assembly's Directory increased liberty, it also augmented responsibility. If it took away the support of set and prescribed forms on which the indolent might lean and even sleep, this was done to the avowed intent that those who conducted public services might the more industriously prepare for them; and thereunto the more diligently stir up the gifts of God within them. Thus, in ordinances which Jesus had given, in sacraments which Jesus had instituted, in only services which Jesus had commanded, and with none but the simple forms which Jesus had made lawful, filled with Christ's spirit, with souls aglow with the love of Christ, worshippers were to draw near to God and ascribe praise, honor and glory unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb forever and ever.

5. The Westminster Assembly believed and taught that this sovereign exaltation of Jesus Christ shall be increasingly glorious through time and resplendent forever. By the King's command, the gospel of the kingdom is to be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. "Christ is to be exalted in his coming again to judge the world . . . . in the full manifestation of his own glory, and of his Father's, with all his

holy angels; with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trumpet of God." . . . "The selfsame bodies of the dead which are laid in the grave, being then again united to their souls forever, shall be raised up by the power of Christ." "The bodies of the just, by the Spirit of Christ and by virtue of his resurrection as their Head, shall be raised in power, spiritual and incorruptible, and made like to his glorious body." . . . "The righteous, being caught up to Christ in the clouds, shall be set on his right hand, and, there openly acknowledged and acquitted, shall join with him in judging of reprobate angels and men; and shall be received into heaven, where they shall be fully and forever freed from all sin and misery: filled with inconceivable joy: made perfectly holy and happy, both in body and soul, in the company of innumerable saints and angels, but especially in the immediate vision and fruition of God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit to all eternity. And this is the perfect and full communion which the members of the invisible church shall enjoy with Christ in glory."

Then, having reigned over the kingdom of universal dominion, in heaven and in earth, until he hath put down all rule, and authority and power, with all enemies beneath his feet, and even death, the last enemy, destroyed, then cometh the end, when the kingdom of power shall have been delivered up to God, even the Father, and Jesus Christ, as Theanthropos, shall reign over the everlasting kingdom of glory, and "God be all in all." Unto him every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father.

And now, Moderator and brethren of the Assembly, with whatever ability God hath given, I have discussed

before you this immense theme. In conclusion, may I not briefly urge two corollaries which the discussion has suggested and impressed?

1. More than thirty-five years ago, in the fair city of Augusta, Ga., on the threshold of a home which she was about to leave for her own separate work and destiny, stood the then youngest of all in the sisterhood of the churches of Jesus Christ. Sad, yet resolute, pensive, yet hopeful, the dark clouds of war hovering over her and an unknown future looming before her, that church called to her side the willing and able Thornwell, and bade him take his pen, mightier than the sword, and write in imperishable record her reasons for her separate existence. That address to all the churches of Jesus Christ is historic and known of you all. The point now to be emphasized is that the cardinal consideration imbedded in that immortal document is, that this church must be separate in order that she might be free from any and all entangling alliances with the state. Upon that solid rock she took her stand. Many storms have swept over her since that eventful hour, but that foundation is still immutably beneath her feet. And, to-day, looking backward over the unnumbered woes which, from Constantine to Charles I., and from Charles I. to the American General Assembly in 1789, have oppressed and crushed to earth the Lamb's wife; and remembering that it took nearly fifteen hundred years for her to emancipate herself from the shackles that fettered her, who can be surprised that the blood of the Covenanting martyrs in Scotland, of the Huguenots in France, of the Puritans in England, should find a voice to sweep to us across these two and a half centuries the admonition: "Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God *the things that are God's!*" Can it be surprising

that those of us who know history should view with shuddering dread any step that tends to take from us the freedom from civil domination wherewith Christ and the long struggle of two hundred years have made us free?

2. The facts of history enable us to understand *why* the sovereignty of God should have been borne in upon the Westminster Assembly so as to transfuse every part of its doctrine, polity, and worship. By the coöperative power of two glorious instrumentalities the omnipotent Jehovah was making bare his arm before the almost bewildered gaze of the men of that day, while his voice proclaimed, "Not by might, nor by power; but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The one of these agencies was the Bible. The Reformation was a revival. Its author was the Holy Ghost. As always, the instrument was the word of God. The Almighty drew the sword of the Spirit, and with it flashed forth the brightness and splendor of his own power and glory. Nearly three centuries before the Assembly, Wycliffe, who died in 1384, had translated the whole Bible out of the Vulgate, and earned the posthumous glory of giving his body to be burned. Just one hundred years later, Tyndale was born, and made almost a fugitive on the face of the earth for his repeated attempts to publish parts of the word of God, until at Antwerp, in 1534, he issues his New Testament, nails his name to its masthead, and, as usual, is burned at the stake. But still the word of God is not bound. Tyndale's friend and co-worker, Miles Coverdale, in 1535, publishes his English translation of the whole Bible, whose version of the Psalms is in the Episcopal Prayer-Book unto this day; his work denounced by the Inquisition and condemned to the flames. Martin

Luther, after twelve years of toil, issues his great German Bible in 1532. The Genevan Bible comes forth in 1560; and our own King James' version in 1611. The long-smothered blaze of revelation was bursting out everywhere, and the light of God's sovereign word was so glorious as to make even persecution "pale its ineffectual fires," as Jerome of Prague dies undaunted at the stake, and Huss of Bohemia goes out of the world as in Elijah's chariot, praying in the Psalms of David and singing with a loud voice the *Christe Eleison.*

The other instrumentality working with the word was God's sovereign and stupendous providence. Steadily and surely the King of Glory was delivering the church from her two ancient oppressors, Rome and Cæsar. Never in earthquake, in whirlwind, or in fire, had the presence of the power and glory of God been more plainly shown than in his providential ruling of all the kings of the earth at this period of history. He puts enmity between the two mighty usurpers of Christ's crown. Henry VIII., bold, headstrong, fickle, and licentious, yet advanced the Reformation. Edward VI., guided by Cranmer and Somerset, and coming under the influence of even John Knox, was made to promote it. Mary Tudor, married to a mummy in all feeling except vindictiveness, and bitter under the outrageous insults heaped upon her divorced mother, would extirpate the faith and burn its every branch; but God, through her, sent disciples to Calvin and scattered the seeds of religion everywhere. Elizabeth thought that two or three preachers would be enough for a whole county, and James and Charles would "harrie them out of the land," but conventicles sprang up like magic, and ministers of the word, the like of whom had almost never before been seen, arose as if out of the very dust of the earth. And

if England had seen God's amazing power, Scotland more. From the common people to the lords, from the lords to the throne, arose the tide; and monarchy was powerless to say, "Hitherto, but no farther." Blood of eighteen thousand martyrs flowed, but every drop of it had a voice to cry from the ground and to preach the word. The very agonies of the dying were the birth-throes of eternal living. Driven from hope in man, to whom might the saints go but unto the sovereign God? When in old Greyfriar's churchyard the Covenanters dipped their pens in the blood gushing warm from their hearts to self-made openings in their veins, and so signed their allegiance to Jesus as King, we can see how, out of the suppressed groans and prayers, not loud, but deep, in that awful hour they must have looked for support to the sovereign God and his everlasting arm. Well may Froude say of these Calvinists: "They were splintered and torn, but no power could bend or melt them." And the reason Froude gives is good: "They dwelt, as pious men are apt to dwell, in suffering and sorrow, on the all-disposing power of Providence. Their burden grew lighter as they considered that God had so determined that they should bear it."

The members of the Westminster Assembly met after two centuries of all this mighty working of God's word and God's providence. Like Elijah at Horeb, they looked out upon the glory of the Lord sweeping before them in earth's convulsions, in tornado and in fire; and then, reverently opening their Bibles under the sanction of their awful oath, and saying, "Speak, Lord, thy servants hear," they blend their Doctrine and Polity into Worship, and all into Doxology: "The Lord is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will we not fear, though the earth be removed, and

though the mountains be whelmed into the midst of the sea."

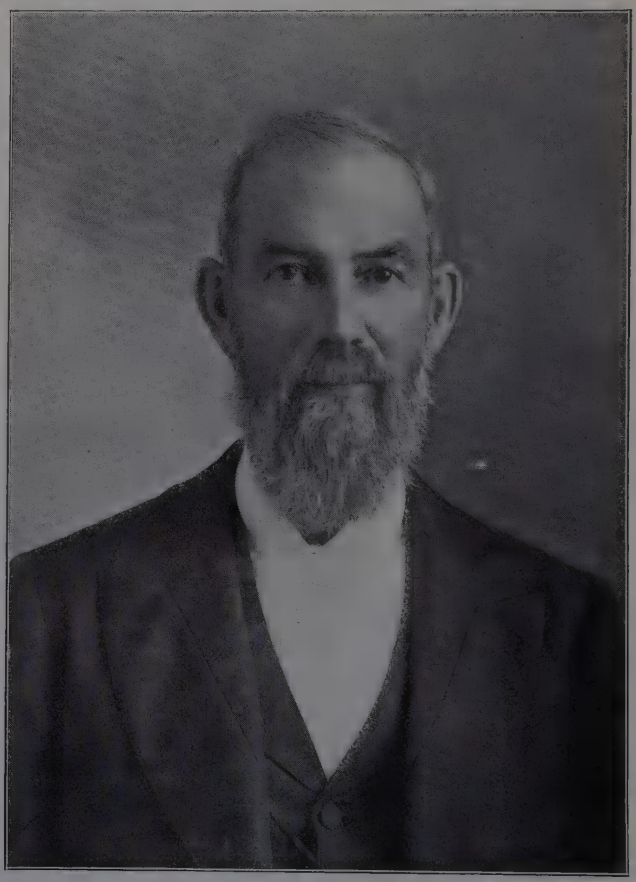
"Allelulia! the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth!"

"Lord of every land and nation,
Ancient of eternal days,
Sounded through the wide creation,
Be thy just and awful praise.

"For thy providence that governs,
Through thine empire's broad domain
Wings an angel, guides a sparrow,
Blessed be thy gentle reign.

"But thy rich, thy free redemption,
Dark through brightness all along;
Thought is poor and poor expression;
Who can sing that awful song!

"Go: return, immortal Saviour;
Leave thy footstool, take thy throne;
Thence return and reign forever!
Be the kingdom all thine own!"



REV. JAMES D. TADLOCK, D. D., LL. D.

VII.

THE CHURCHES THAT HOLD THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS, AND THE REFORMED CHURCHES GENERALLY—THEIR POINTS OF CONTACT AND CONTRAST; THEIR PRESENT RELATIONS, WORK, AND OUTLOOK.

BY

REV. JAMES D. TADLOCK, D. D., LL. D.,

PROFESSOR IN THE PRESBYTERIAN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA.

ANALYSIS.

Topic stated.—Statistics of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches given.—In the United Kingdom.—In North America.—In South America.—Australasia.—In other places.—Other Reformed Churches —Total number.—Distribution.—The Reformation in its two branches.—The one Lutheran, and the other Calvinistic.—Their creeds.—The Reformed creeds are twofold.—The one Zwinglian, the other Calvinistic.—The work of Calvin and Zwingli contrasted.—Various Catechisms and Confessions described.—About thirty in number.—Heidelberg.—Thirty-nine Articles.—Westminster Standards.—Helvetic.—Dort.—French.—Belgic.—Arminian Articles.—The Sixty-seven Articles.—Luther's theses—Berne.—Basel.—Calvin's Catechism.—Gallican.—Brandenberg.—Elizabeth's Articles.—Irish Articles.—Scottish Confessions.—Finally the Westminster Standards emerged.—The doctrinal harmony of these great creeds.—Westminster Assembly fell heir to all of them.—Its work was not all new work.—The building of Solomon's temple taken to illustrate the work of the Westminster Assembly.—Doctrine and polity contrasted and compared.—The situation in Britain in this connection.—The corresponding situation in America.—Reference made to the Sixth General Council of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches.—The outlook.—General survey takes a wide sweep.—The mission of the church generally.—Of the Reformed Churches specially.—Her theology and her ministry.—The great need of the sinful world.—The world-wide missionary activity of these churches.—Reasons for encouragement.—Discouragements there are, but they fade out of sight.—The glorious hope of final triumph.—All branches of the Lord's host are to stand and work together.—They shall have a share in the glory that shall surely come.—Tokens of a coming storm.—Pledges of an assured victory.

VII.

THE CHURCHES THAT HOLD THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS, AND THE REFORMED CHURCHES GENERALLY.

THE topic assigned to me is as follows: "The Churches that Hold the Westminster Symbols, and the Reformed Churches Generally; Their Points of Contact and Contrast; Their Present Relations, Work, and Outlook." The various subdivisions of this topic will be taken up in the order of their statement. In order to bring the subject before us with a degree of completeness some detailed statistics must be given. These will give us a clear view of the Presbyterian and Reformed churches in general, and of those holding the Westminster Standards in particular. The statistics we have been able to gather are as follows:

CHURCHES THAT HOLD THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS.

THE UNITED KINGDOM.

	MINISTERS.	MEMBERS.
1. Presbyterian Church of England,	339	68,997
2. Church of Scotland in England,	14	3,552
3. Presbyterian Church in Ireland,	656	104,838
4. Reformed Presbyter'n Church in Ireland,	29	4,085
5. Eastern Reformed Pres. Ch. in Ireland,		
6. Secession Church of Ireland,	7	1,230
7. Church of Scotland,	1,608	620,376
8. Free Church of Scotland,	1,165	344,273
9. United Presbyterian Church of Scotland,	610	190,950
10. Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland,	8	1,176
11. United Original Secession Ch. [Scotland],	21	3,837
	4,457	1,343,314

NORTH AMERICA.

	Ministers.	Members.
1. Presbyterian Church in Canada,	1,077	188,180
2. Canada Synod of Church of Scotland,	6	1,134
3. Presbyterian Church in the U. S. A.,	6,797	1,070,246
4. Presbyterian Church in the U. S.,	1,349	210,539
5. Associate Ref'd Pres. Ch. of the South,	87	10,640
6. Associate Ref'd Pres. Ch. of N. America,		. . .
7. Gen'l Synod Ref'd Pres. Ch. America,	35	6,000
8. Synod Ref'd Pres. Church in America,	109	11,272
9. United Pres. Church of North America,	895	123,541
	10,355	1,621,552

SOUTH AMERICA AND WEST INDIES.

	Ministers.	Members.
1. Presbyterian Church of Brazil,	31	44,000
2. Presbytery of Trinidad,	10	745
3. Presbytery of British Guiana		. . .
4. Presbyterian Church of Jamaica,	29	10,981
	70	55,726

AUSTRALASIA.

	Ministers.	Members.
1. Pres. Church of Eastern Australasia,	6	270
2. Pres. Church of New South Wales,	159	10,447
3. Pres. Church of South Australia,	17	1,430
4. Presbyterian Church of Victoria,	226	22,873
5. Presbyterian Church of Queensland,	42	5,000
6. Presbyterian Church of Tasmania,	70	1,500
7. Presbyterian Church of New Zealand,	84	8,902
8. Presbyterian Ch. Otago and Southland,	84	13,302
9. Mission Synod of New Hebrides,	20	. . .
	708	63,724

MISCELLANEOUS.

	Ministers.	Members.
1. Evangelical Church in Italy,	18	1,449
2. Independent Presbyteries in China,		. . .
3. Presbyterian Church of Manchuria,	19	2,000
4. Presbyterian Church of Korea,		156
5. Presbytery of South Formosa,		1,257
6. Presbytery of Ceylon,	5	1,120
Carried forward,	42	5,982

	MINISTERS.	MEMBERS.
Brought forward, ...	42	5,982
7. Presby's of Ch. of Scotland in Africa, ...	. .	. . .
8. Presby's of Free Ch. of Scotland in Africa, . . .	. .	. . .
9. Pres'y United Pres. Ch. of Scot. in Af'ca, . . .	. .	. . .
	42	5,982
TOTAL, ...	14,737	2,966,757

Number of churches that hold Westminster Symbols, . . . 42

The Reformers in the first part of the sixteenth century were called Protestants, taking the name from a protest which they entered against the famous edict passed at the diet of Spires, A. D. 1529. Later an irreconcilable difference emerged between Luther and Zwingli, who led the Reformation in Switzerland. This was principally in regard to the Lord's supper and the extent of God's sovereignty, but resulted in the permanent division of the Protestants, to be known henceforward as Lutheran and Reformed. Notwithstanding both are Reformed, still the terms have received a historical setting, and for convenience are used to designate the two great divisions of the Protestant church. Our topic will lead us to speak only of the Reformed Church or churches.

To get the sweep of our field it is necessary to indulge a little further in statistics, the dry bones of history.

Besides the churches in the United States that adopt the Westminster Standards there are other large and influential churches that accept these Standards as the basis of their church doctrine. Of these may be mentioned the United Presbyterian Church of North America, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, the Reformed (D.) Church in America, the Reformed (G.) Church in the United States of America, the Synod of the Reformed

Presbyterian Church in America, General Synod Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Welsh Calvinistic Methodist or Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, the Christian Reformed Church in America. The membership of these churches aggregate more than 650,000. It is estimated that the adherents of the Presbyterian and Reformed churches in the world number 25,000,000. In Europe they are distributed as follows: Bohemia, 70,000; France, 800,000; Germany, 3,000,000; Holland, 2,500,000; Hungary, 2,000,000; Switzerland, 1,700,000; other countries (in Europe), 250,000; Africa, 400,000; Asia, 300,000; Australia, 200,000; South America, 30,000.[1]

While the Reformation movements in Germany and Switzerland were contemporaneous, yet they were independent of each other. Luther was born in 1483; Zwingli in 1484. Luther put a stop to Tetzel's selling indulgences in Wittenberg by nailing his ninety-five theses on the church door in 1517. Zwingli drove Sampson, the indulgence seller, from Zurich in 1518. The movements in their beginnings were almost simultaneous, the occasion the same, each was headed by a single leader, the evils and wrongs of the papacy protested against by both the same, and yet the lines of development diverge and end in organizations as widely different as are the Lutheran and Reformed churches. May not the free government and mountains of Switzerland, in contrast with the monarchy and despotic Charles of Germany, have had some influence in shaping what is distinctive in the two churches?

Let us look more narrowly at the principal Reformed creeds. They number more than thirty. The three most widely accepted are the Heidelberg Catechism, the

[1] See *Presbyterian Hand-Book*, 1897.

Thirty-nine Articles, and the Westminster Standards. Next to these are the Helvetic Confession and the canons of the Synod of Dort.

The Reformed Confessions may be classified as Zwinglian and Calvinistic. As to nativity they may be designated as Swiss, German, French, Dutch, English, and Scotch. To the Swiss family belong the Confessions of Zurich, Basel, Berne, and Geneva; to the German family belong the Heidelberg Catechism, the Tetrapolitan, Brandenburg, and Anhalt Confessions; to France and the Netherlands belong the French and the Belgic Confessions, the canons of the Synod of Dort, and the Arminian Articles; to the English family belong the Thirty-nine Articles, the Scotch Confessions, and the Westminster Standards. Besides these there are others of less importance that originated in Bohemia, Poland, and Hungary.

Since we trace back the pedigree of the Reformed families to Switzerland, we may note the growth from that point. Zwingli wrote four theological works, which were symbolical in character. The first in 1523, which consisted of sixty-seven articles. These, like Luther's theses, were intended for public disputation. These articles exalt the headship of Christ, the supremacy of the Scriptures, and present the way of salvation freed from the accretions of popery. His second work was the Ten theses of Berne, issued in 1526. In this, again, is emphasized the headship of Christ in the church, the supremacy of the Scriptures as the standard of final appeal, and Christ the only way of salvation; at the same time are denounced masses for the dead, and other unscriptural doctrines of the Romish church. The third is a Confession of Faith addressed to the Emperor Charles V. in 1530. The fourth, an exposition of the Christian faith addressed to Francis I. in 1531.

The author of the *Confession of Basel* was Æcolampadius. This was written in 1531, and makes the Scriptures the standard of final appeal.

The second *Helvetic Confession* is the first of the Reformed churches of national authority. Bullinger was its author. It appeared at Zurich in 1566, and was Zwinglian in its tone. It consists of thirty chapters, and in its wide sweep covers the whole field of controversy between the Reformers and the Romanists. It is at the same time a witness and a protest. It makes a wide discrimination between the authority of the Scriptures and that of the fathers, councils and traditions. It places the crown upon the Saviour's brow.

The *Catechism of Geneva*, revised and enlarged by Calvin, appeared in 1541, and was translated at different times into Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, German, Dutch, Hungarian, Greek and Hebrew. Of the contents of this creed it is unnecessary to remark.

Of France and the Netherlands there are three important Confessions. The most important is the Gallican, published in 1559, the work of John Calvin, and is a summary of the doctrines of grace as grasped by his great mind.

Belgium is historic ground, hallowed by martyrs' blood. It may claim the honor of having furnished the first martyrs of evangelical Protestantism. Into this fair land Philip II. of Spain sent his butcher, the Duke of Alva, with 10,000 men to extirpate heretics. After prosecuting for six years his bloody work he made the infamous boast that besides the multitudes slain in battle and massacred after the victory, he had consigned to the executioner 18,000 victims. The Confession of this people is known as the Belgic, and it was to exterminate the noble confessors of it that Philip turned loose 10,000

Spanish blood-hounds. The author of this Confession was the martyr Guido De Bres, and its date 1561.

The Synod of Dort, with representatives from England, Scotland and Germany, met in 1618. This Synod adopted canons under five heads of doctrine, which embraced the Calvinistic system. The oldest Confession of the Reformed Church in Germany attempts to mediate between Luther, Zwingli and Calvin. It gives no uncertain sound, however, as to the supremacy of the Scriptures and the doctrine of justification by faith. It was adopted in 1530.

The Heidelberg Catechism ranks with the best of the Reformed symbols. It is claimed to excel all others in catholicity; this, probably, is owing to the fact that it presents less jaggedly the angular points of Calvinism. Its principal author was Ursinus, in 1563.

There were three Confessions of Brandenburg, the central province of Prussia, the latest dating 1645. There were many other creeds adopted in Germany, of less importance and less general in their use.

The Thirty-nine Articles, or the Elizabethan Creed, as they are called, were perfected and published in 1563. The Irish Articles were framed in 1615, while the Scotch Confessions bring us up to 1643. All these Confessions which we have noticed antedate the Assembly that adopted the Westminster Standards.

I have been thus specific in enumerating these Confessions and attaching their dates in order that we may not be unmindful of our indebtedness to those who formulated them, and sometimes sealed their testimony with martyr-blood. While appreciating and honoring that venerable body of great and good men that left to the church such an admirable formulation of scriptural doctrine, let us not forget those whose sweat, and prayers, and blood

prepared the ground and furnished so much of the material. From the day that Luther nailed his theses upon the door of the old church in Wittenberg until the meeting of the Assembly of illustrious divines in Westminster, one hundred and thirty years, no brighter galaxy of names can be found in ecclesiastical history than those that illumine, and adorn these pages. They had to attack the enemy in fortifications built and strengthened by the ages. Crowned and sceptred monarchs with armies to do their bidding, and popes clothed with power to interdict and to anathematize, occupied the ground. The civil and ecclesiastical powers had been struggling for centuries for the mastery. And while this contest was waging, civil and religious liberty was ground between the upper and nether millstones. And when the Reformers appeared on the scene, as of old when for the accomplishment of a given purpose the Pharisees and Sadducees and the Herodians combined, so in this case kings and emperors and cardinals and popes united their forces. And not since the days of Nero and Diocletian has this old crazy world witnessed such persecutions and wholesale massacres. And thus the conflict went on, while the enemy never fell back but an inch at a time, and the Reformers gained only an inch at a time, and that at the price of blood, and these creeds that have been mentioned garnered up what was so dearly won.

There is a remarkable agreement among these Confessions in exalting God's sovereignty in matters of salvation, Christ's headship in the church, the Scriptures the standard of final appeal, and the sovereignty, under God, of the individual conscience. These were the great cardinal truths at issue between the Reformers on the one side, and Romanists and Erastians on the other; and in

these creeds they formulated all that is vital to the doctrines of the Reformed churches. Those who came later fell heir to all that had been achieved before. When the Westminster Assembly of divines met they were in possession of all these symbols which embodied the results of the sixteenth century and first half of the seventeenth. Not only this, they were in possession of the Apostolic, the Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds. Not only this, they had the advantage of all that was involved in that undercurrent of reform and noble protest that ran through much of the Dark Ages. Wycliffe is called the morning star of the Reformation. That star glimmered on the horizon two hundred years before the ring of Luther's hammer was heard in Wittenberg, and was the harbinger of a galaxy of stars soon to throw their light athwart the darkness of papal night. In this toil and suffering and patient waiting, I find, in some respects, an analogy in the building of the ancient temple. I hear the patient pick in a thousand quarries, and the ring of the axe on a hundred slopes of Lebanon. I see them bringing down the polished stones and dressed cedar, and loading them on rafts along the Mediterranean coast. These I follow until landed at a point opposite to Jerusalem. Here starts a line of toilers stretching from the sea across to Mount Moriah, conveying the materials, and delivering them to the builders, under whose magic skill rises the beautiful Temple of Solomon, so long to resound with the music of worship. And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither, so that there was neither hammer nor axe nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building. Those who laid the stones and adjusted the timbers, however skillfully they did it, were not entitled to all the glory of that temple. So those who formu-

lated the Westminster Symbols, however wisely they did it, must divide the honors with the centuries. They did their work well, but most of the material used was made ready before it was brought thither.

Some of the Reformed churches hold to the system of doctrine that is taught in the Westminster Standards, but reject the church polity of the Standards; others hold to the polity, but reject some of the doctrines. Of these we have examples in our own country. The Cumberland Church is strictly Presbyterian in polity, while it mars and mutilates the Westminster system of doctrine. Its theology is neither Calvinistic nor Arminian, but a mixture of both. It is like the image that was part of iron and part of clay. The Baptist Church, so far as it formally accepts a creed, receives the theology of the Westminster Standards, except as to one of the sacraments, but the polity of the Baptist Church is congregational. The historical position of the Church of England is quite peculiar if not anomalous. While recognized as belonging to the Reformed family, yet it is sometimes spoken of as the half-way house between Rome and Geneva, or between Romanism and Protestantism. To say the least, the Anglican church is a compromise; and it is difficult, looked at from a human standpoint, to see how, under the circumstances, it could have been otherwise. The throne of England during the sixteenth century was occupied by Henry VIII. and his children. Henry was a Roman Catholic, but England was too small for him and the Pope. Henry cared but little for the church, but he was determined to be monarch, and, therefore, aided the Reformation in resisting the claim of the Romish church to exercise civil power. Edward, who succeeded his father, was favorable to the Reformation. Mary, who succeeded Edward, was a Roman

Catholic of the Spanish type; she was followed by Elizabeth, who had the iron will of her father. Yet, the subjects in her realm being as they were, her Parliament as it was, the international relations of the kingdom as they were, it is difficult to see how she could have acted differently without endangering her throne and plunging Europe into a bloody war. The outcome was that a Calvinist creed and a semi-Romish polity and worship were adopted for the Anglican church. The position of the Anglican church is that of an unstable equilibrium. Hence the tendency is towards Rome, or to recede, as is evidenced by high church and low church.

What is known as the orthodox Congregational Church combines Calvinistic theology with Congregational polity. The term "Reformed," as it is used in this country, is applied to Calvinistic divisions of Protestants of British origin. The principal of these who do not adopt the Westminster symbols are the Reformed Church in America and the Reformed Church in the United States. The United Presbyterian Church of North America is the result of an union of the Associate with the Associate Reformed, which was itself the product of the union of the Reformed and Associate churches. The Reformed Church in America is one of the oldest denominations in our country. It was planted by the settlers in New Amsterdam, N. Y., as early as 1628. Its courts include the classes, the particular synod, and the general synod. Its principal symbol is the Heidelberg Catechism. The Reformed Church in the United States was formed in 1747, of exiles from the Palatinate. The theological school at Mercersburg belongs to this denomination. While the theology is Calvinistic, it is not of a rigid type. The form of worship may be described as litur-

gical. These are the principal Reformed churches in North America.

In the sixth General Council of the Alliance of the Reformed Churches holding the Presbyterian System, held at Glasgow in 1896, there were eighty-six represented; of these, thirty-six adopt the Westminster Standards.

Time will not allow any more minute consideration of their points of contact and contrast, nor of their present relations. I close this paper with some reflections as to their outlook.

The centuries are behind us, but the millenniums are before us. Much has been gained on the battle-grounds of the past. The cycles of history, as they have rolled on, swept away environments that hampered development and checked progress. From the announcement of the protevangelium until the song of annunciation rang out over Judæan hills, every cycle of the history widened out the horizon and projected in clearer outline on brighter skies the scheme of redeeming love. The introduction of the gospel was a transition from Jewish legalism to free grace.

The Reformation broke the iron grasp of the papacy and imposed restrictions upon the sceptre of emperors and kings. Much was gained in rescuing the church from ecclesiastical bondage and civil domination. It was a signal epoch in asserting the spirituality of the church and vindicating the crown rights of our Lord. And it was a preparation for the mitigation of the barbarities of intolerance.

The Reformed churches have a grand mission to perform for this poor, sin-cursed world. Her theology equips her for it. The scheme of mercy starts from God and reaches down to earth. The system of theology of

the Reformed churches heads in and starts from the sovereignty of God, and, reaching down, wakes a response in the cry of helplessness. The Reformed churches have always emphasized the preaching of the word. This is in accord with the divine plan, for it pleased God to save men by preaching, and the parting words of the Master are, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel," coupled with the promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world."

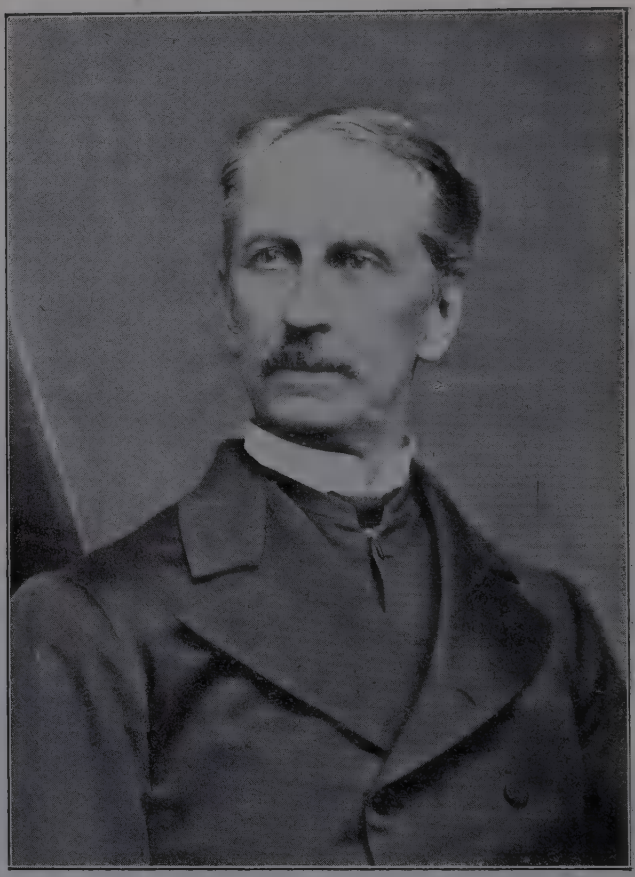
As brightening the outlook, I remark further that these churches in recent times seem to have a growing realization of the obligation and the glory of being co-workers with the Godhead in the consummation of the crowning work of the Trinity, when the person that paid the price shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

Note further the territorial extent of these churches. They girdle the world. They are planted in papal and pagan lands. Their torches are blazing on all the coast-lines and sending their beams across the continents of darkness.

Some see discouragement in these divisions among the Reformed churches, but division is far better than petrifaction and corruption in unity. Our flag is the same, our marching-orders the same, the conquest aimed at in all the campaigns the same. This is no day for faint-heartedness among God's people. The voice of prophecy and of history emphasizes the great commission delivered by the Master when he took his departure from earth, and imparts significancy to the promise of his speedy return. When the loving and earnest cry shall go up from all along the lines, "*Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly*," then may be heard breaking from the cleft sky the response, "Lo, I come." I am no enthusiast, but the Lord is coming in power, love and grace, and he

will come as soon as the church decks herself to meet him.

In conclusion, in this outlook I do not overlook that other grand division of the Protestant church. We would not if we could, and we could not if we would, forget that grand old man that towers in history, who threw down the gauntlet and joined issue with mitred popes and cardinals and the crowned heads of Europe. The nailing of the theses on the door of the old church at Wittenberg, October 31, 1517, drew a line across the track of history as ineffaceable as did the Noachian flood. The Reformed churches can never forget the Diet of Worms, where Martin Luther closed his memorable speech with the words, "*Here I stand; I can do naught else. God help me. Amen.*" The Reformed churches are not alone. The bugle blast is heard in other camps summoning to the conflict. It may be that the clouds that are scurrying across the political sky of Europe portend the coming of a storm that is to shake, not the earth only, but also heaven, that the things which cannot be shaken may remain. When that time comes, Reformed, and Lutheran, and Methodist, too, will link shields. And when the conflict is over, all will come and pile their trophies at the feet of Jesus and crown him Lord of all.



REV. MOSES D. HOGE, D. D., LL. D.

VIII.

RELATION OF THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS TO FOREIGN MISSIONS.

BY

Rev. MOSES D. HOGE, D. D., LL. D.,

PASTOR OF THE SECOND PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, AT RICHMOND, VA

ANALYSIS.

Commemorations: their significance and value.—Westminster Abbey and its associations.—Dean Stanley.—Connection between the Westminster Standards and foreign missions.—Influence not immediate.—Dark Ages after the apostolic era.—The Reformation not a foreign missionary era.—Hindrances to missions after the publication of the Westminster Standards.—Blighting influence of the Moderate party.—Ejectment for nonconformity.—The Standards not an original fountain.—Early enterprises marred by misconception of the scriptural plan of missions.—Colonial and commercial enterprises.—Men in advance of their times.—Pathetic failures.—Characteristic of our own age.—The church, by its divine constitution, a missionary organization.—The recognition of this principle in Scotland and the United States.—Progress of missions in consequence.—Missionary work of the Presbyterian Church and that of other denominations.—The vast number of communicants and adherents throughout the world.—Approval of Presbyterian principles and methods.—Lay representation and ruling elders.—The aborigines of our own country.—Eliot and Brainerd.—Two typical missionaries, Alexander Duff and J. Leighton Wilson.—Congratulations from an Œcumenical Council.

VIII.

RELATION OF THE WESTMINSTER STANDARDS TO FOREIGN MISSIONS.

PROBABLY no event has occurred within the memory of any one in this audience so calculated to awaken the attention of our Presbyterian people to the value of the Westminster Standards in giving direction and development to the social, national, and ecclesiastical life of the world as the commemoration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of their formation.

It is in compliance with the recommendation of our General Assembly that we are engaged in this celebration. Some of our presbyteries have anticipated us, and great audiences have been gathered to listen to the stirring addresses of speakers appointed for the purpose of discussing the characteristic truths of our Confessions and the wide influence they have exerted for two hundred and fifty years. Our religious papers and even the secular press has caught the tune of the time, and in numberless editorials and communications have called public attention to what the Presbyterians are doing.

Our Northern brethren in their General Assembly, now in session, will take up the theme and make arrangements for a commemoration, possibly on a greater scale, though not with greater enthusiasm than our own. Throughout the vast domain in which their churches are thickly planted, eloquent voices will rehearse the history of the Westminster Assembly and recount to listening thousands the great principles, proclaimed by

an assembly of divines such as England never before and never since could gather for the consideration of themes of such sacred and surpassing interest.

Nor will these commemorations be confined to our own continent. They will be repeated among the English-speaking populations of many lands, and thus by all the diversified agencies I have enumerated the story of the Westminster Assembly will become familiar to eager hearers, whose number cannot be calculated.

I was greatly moved by the address of my distinguished brother from Louisville, and especially by his graphic description of the most historic edifice in the world—Westminster Abbey—and his portrayal of the scences which had been witnessed in the Jerusalem Chamber. I can only compare his address to the picture he gave us in his peroration of the scenery on the Scottish coast, where the waves of ocean had carved the clifts in shapes of rugged grandeur, and yet in the crevices of the clifts grew the clambering vines and the fragrant flowers which gave color, tenderness, and softness to the rocky ramparts.

It so happens that I have spent more time in the city of London than any other city in the world except Richmond and Baltimore. There is in London no public edifice, secular or sacred, which I have entered so frequently as Westminster Abbey. During Dean Stanley's visit to Richmond something happened which disposed him to do me some favor. I had just returned from England, and he said: "The next time you visit London I will do for you what no one else can probably do better. I will show you Westminster Abbey." He knew that I was already familiar with the building, and I knew what he meant by the offer. There was, indeed, no one else who could discant so eloquently on every

chapel, shrine, and monument. It so happened that I returned to London the next summer. One evening I visited the Abbey. No tourists were there. I had the stately, solemn pile all to myself for a brief, impressive season. You may imagine how startled I was as I slowly made my way down the aisle when I was suddenly confronted with the marble on which was inscribed *Arthur Penrhyn Stanley*, and standing there remembered that he who less than a twelvemonth before had so kindly promised to be my guide was now lying in the dark crypt beneath.

One of the most interesting apartments of the Abbey is the Jerusalem Chamber. Of this I need not speak. The address just referred to has described the place so graphically, and has so impressed the associations connected with it, that you feel as if you had personally seen what has been so clearly depicted. It is what transpired in that chamber two and a half centuries ago that so deeply interests us now.

In such commemorations there is a great moral element. Sometimes it is good to get free from the narrow environments of the immediate present and ascend some eminence which commands a view of ways long since trodden, and then, from what is taught in the review, learn to forecast the ever-widening way of the future. It is only by such studies that we catch the spirit of the great historic eras which have been potent in shaping the institutions of our own times. It is only when we can transport ourselves to the distant past and evoke from its obscurity the forms of its heroic men; it is only when we acquaint ourselves with the errors they combated, the difficulties they surmounted, the hardships they endured, that we can fully comprehend the character of the men who thus toiled and suffered, or appreciate the value of

their lives, or trace the influence of their examples and principles upon succeeding generations. Thus placing ourselves among them, we take a new interest in the men themselves and in the work they achieved, and while we embalm their memories in grateful recollection, we catch the fire which yet lives in their ashes, and we feel the inspiration which their great examples of devotion to duty enkindles in our hearts.

It was my office to make an address on "The Educational Influence of Presbyterianism on National Life" at our council in Glasgow last summer. On another memorable occasion I discussed "The Influence of the Westminster Standards on the Religious Thought of After Times." The connection between the principles embodied in these Standards and the development of a noble national life is obvious. So, too, is their potency in shaping the religious opinions of those who come in contact with them. But the relation between our Standards and foreign missions is not at once apparent. It is difficult to trace, historically, with satisfactory clearness, any such immediate influence as would place Presbyterians in advance of other Protestant denominations either as to priority in time or successful activity in missionary work.

It is one of the happy facts in the history of missions that God has been pleased to bless with increase and progress all branches of the Christian church which hold by common agreement to the fundamental truths of salvation. We are often reminded that each branch of the church propagating truth in its own way is like one of the primary colors, each beautiful in its own hue, while it is the blended light of all these varied tints that constitutes the pure, white light of day. It requires the whole brotherhood of the redeemed to reflect the beauty and glory of the altogether lovely.

In listening to the addresses which have made this session of our General Assembly so memorable, I have observed no disposition to arrogate to Presbyterian doctrine and church government any such preëminence as would be offensive to brethren of other denominations or displeasing to One to whom assumptions of superiority and self-glorification may be regarded as injustice to other members of his family equally dear to him.

We may be grateful for the possession of such a clear, concise, symmetrical system of truth as that contained in our Confessions, and for a form of government so simple and so easily adapted to all the exigencies of church life and to all the varied conditions of humanity arising from culture, social position, and distinctive characteristics of race, and at the same time we may be conscious that we have often been slow to take advantage of our endowments and opportunities. If we have been remiss or tardy in illustrating our own principles in their power to inspire the most practical activity, we ought not to complain if others have applied these principles more readily and vigorously than ourselves.

We can see that our Standards *ought* to have kindled the missionary spirit as it did the spirit of civil and religious liberty. It *did* kindle the latter transcendently, triumphantly, whenever tyranny in the state and despotism in the church attempted to nullify the rights of citizens or to invade the sacred domain of conscience. But we are sadly familiar with the story of the early efforts made to suppress any organized movement for the evangelization of the heathen world, not only in other churches, but in our own. Who has not remembered with grieved surprise the ruling of the senior member of an Association when a young man, who subsequently became one of the most eminent of missionaries, proposed for the con-

sideration of the body the duty of sending the gospel to the heathen, was peremptorily ordered to sit down, the command being accompanied by an assertion of the venerable father, "When it pleases God to convert the heathen he will do it without your aid or mine." It was not, however, in an Association but in a Presbyterian General Assembly that a similar proposition to send the gospel to the heathen was treated not only as an unnatural, but also as a revolutionary design. This was in 1796, but even as late as the year 1824, when a few of the students of St. Andrews formed themselves into a missionary society, the authorities of the university would not assign them a room for their meetings, and one of the students in after years published the statement that during the whole course of his theological training not a single reference was ever made to the subject of the world's evangelization, as if the function of the church was to conserve all the blessings of the covenant of grace for the benefit of those who had already received them.

When Dr. Duff returned to Scotland to recruit after the failure of his health in India, and to awaken the missionary zeal of his countrymen, he found them so absorbed in certain political questions, very important in themselves, no doubt, especially those which affected their ecclesiastical interests, that it was difficult at first to obtain a hearing, and when he proposed to visit the presbyteries that he might portray what he had seen and heard of the wants and woes of the populous East, and to enkindle the enthusiasm of his people in reference to the illimitable field white for the harvest, his proposition was received with doubts and fears by some, and with blank amazement by others.

It is true that he finally gained the ear and heart of

the church, and the discouragement he suffered at first only made his ultimate success more conspicuous by the contrast. These grave doubts, and the graver opposition encountered by the friends of foreign missions long after the work of the Westminster Assembly had been completed, now excite our wonder and grief, especially when we remember that the great principles which give divine sanction and encouragement to the duty of attempting the evangelization of all nations were all embodied in those Standards.

As a summary of the cardinal doctrines of the word of God; as a code of Christian ethics; as a concise statement of the government, discipline and worship of the church as taught in the Holy Scriptures, they stand unrivalled among all human expositions of sacred truth. We have the demonstration of this fact in the admirable volume recently issued by our Committee of Publication, entitled *The Presbyterian Standards*, composed by a professor in one of our theological seminaries—a work characterized by the judicial fairness of its statements, the clearness of its analysis, the simplicity of its style, and the reverential loyalty and love for the church and its divine head which suffuses it, in which the author makes it plain that the duty of the church in reference to the conversion of the world is everywhere implied in these Standards, and may be logically inferred from their teachings, inasmuch as the whole theory and trend of the Calvinistic system makes the evangelization of the nations the chief enterprise of the church. "God, through Christ, by the Spirit, has given the message of life to the church, and the church in turn is to give this saving message to the whole world." Such is the teaching of the Westminster Standards. But if it be asked why did not the churches into whose possession they came imme-

diately recognize their obligation, it might also be asked why did not the churches which succeeded the apostolic era of missionary enterprise continue to prosecute the work which made that era the golden age in missionary annals? Why came the ages denominated "dark," whose darkness was made all the more visible by the few illuminated points where apostolic fervor still survived amidst the general gloom? Why, with equal emphasis it might be asked, was not the Reformation of the sixteenth century immediately followed by a great missionary revival? We might take it for granted that such a reformation could not have been an accomplished fact without kindling in the souls of those who had been irradiated by its light an inextinguishable desire to send the gospel to the benighted portions of the earth which had never been touched by its beams. Here and there, indeed, this desire had found practical expression in the isolated efforts to send missionaries into fields never trodden by the messengers of peace. But even the great leaders of the Reformation do not seem to have had a clear conception of the all-comprehending purpose of their Lord in the universal extension of his kingdom or of the corresponding obligations of his people. "All the world" was a field so vast that the Reformed churches just emerging from the ignorance and superstition which had so long enthralled them, and struggling to maintain their own existence amidst surrounding foes so formidable and aggressive, found enough to tax their energies to the utmost in guarding what they had won. The evangelization even of the contiguous nations, bitterly hostile to the new faith, was an undertaking too great for their resources. Even Luther at times despaired of the universal triumph of the gospel. The gentle Melanchthon left on record no statement of his anticipations

of the day when the kingdoms of the world would become the kingdoms of their Lord. Erasmus alone, whose birth twenty-three years before that of Luther, placed him, as it were, on the boundary line of the Reformation era, and who was so often irresolute when decision was demanded and ready to compromise when truth was at stake, was in advance of his co-temporaries in his clear conception of the duty of the church to evangelize the heathen world, and seemed to catch more of the spirit of the glowing verse of David and Isaiah when, with the light of the coming morning in their eyes, they hailed the day when the Gentile world would rejoice in the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. His sweetest song was his last, when in his celebrated missionary treatise, published the year before his death, he rebuked Christian nations for making war upon the heathen instead of striving to woo and win them to Christ, and so taught the men of his generation that it was not the mailed hand of the warrior but the ministering hand of the servants of the Prince of Peace that would ultimately rule the world! Had this been the spirit of his co-temporaries, the melancholy admission made by one of our standard writers on missions might not have been put on record, in which it is asserted that, "from the (Lutheran) awakening down to the work of Carey in Serampore, during three centuries the Reformed churches were asleep as to missions, spending their time in internal dissentions"; nor the admission of another historian who declares that "as to Protestant foreign missions the Reformation had only indirect or long-delayed results."

When after the dissolution of the Long Parliament and the restoration of Charles II., the "Act of Uniformity" was passed, and when the memorable day in 1662 came,

on which more than two thousand of the most learned and godly ministers in England were ejected from their charges (six hundred of their brethren in Scotland also abandoning their livings), and when their congregations were compelled to meet by stealth, if they met at all, in desolate fields or on the lonely mountain-side, surprise has been expressed that when prohibited from preaching the gospel at home they did not fly to foreign lands and there find the opportunity denied them in their own land. But those who reason thus forget the insurmountable obstacles arising from the impossibility of co-operation, or from ignorance of openings for missionary service in foreign lands, and the want of any base of supply and support at home. We see the providential compensation for this hindrance in the fact that when the tongue was silent the pen was never more active or more efficiently employed, for that was the period when those massive volumes of practical and polemic theology were composed, learned, logical, scriptural, and all suffused with the very sweetness of the gospel, constituting the noblest religious literature that has made any age of the world illustrious. Among those silenced by the Act of Uniformity were Flavel, Baxter, Owen, Charnock, Bates, Alleine, and Howe. None of them had been members of the Westminster Assembly, but their writings were the noblest commentaries on the Confessions and Catechisms of that Assembly, and saturated with their spirit. This was England's golden age of theology, and the men who made it illustrious doubtless rendered a more enduring service to evangelical religion than they could have done, at that perturbed period, in the missionary field.

We should not expect too much in the way of direct and immediate stimulation to foreign missions from our

Westminster Standards for another reason. These Standards, instead of being an original fountain, formed a *reservoir* into which the healthful waters from many an ancient river emptied themselves.

We find a parallel to this in the Constitution of our country, defining the form of government and providing for the security of the institutions under which we have made such progress in prosperity and power. But if it should be asked, What were the influences which gave birth to these institutions which constitute such a precious heritage, it would not be a satisfactory answer to say that they were the creations of the patriots and sages who framed our Constitution and declarations of right, for the question would recur, From what sources did they derive the principles embodied in these Codes and Constitutions?

Did the masterly state papers, filled with philosophic inductions and with lucid expression of the profoundest maxims of political wisdom and unanswerable demonstrations of popular right, such as commanded the admiration of the wisest statemen in the old world, spring spontaneously from the soil like the giant trees of the Western forests?

We give all honor to patriot statesmen who built up the visible structure of our government, but the noble Constitution which they framed was not their invention. Their task was to formulate and put down upon parchment the clearest statement of the principles which had been throbbing in the bosoms of patriots and struggling for expression through generations of conflict for the right. "It was," as has well been said, "not the fountain out of which the streams of liberty flowed, but the reservoir into which a thousand little rills had been running until finally it overflowed with waters to refresh a continent."

So we may say of the great compendium of truth formulated by the Westminster divines. Its tributaries from apostolic times, through all subsequent ages, though sometimes small and often intermittent, never ceased to flow. For purity of doctrine, conservation of what is fittest to survive, and antagonism to all that is fittest to perish; for condensation of great truths expressed in the fewest words, these Standards, by the admission of those who have no sympathy with Presbyterianism, are unrivalled among all uninspired writings. They gather up the cardinal truths enunciated through all the ages and present them in the most concise form. Their superiority consists not in the originality of the truths themselves, but in condensing what was best in all the theological systems of the past, and presenting them in the tersest and most intelligible form. We may say of the Westminster Standards what was said of the proverbial philosophy of many generations:

> "The truth, though old and oft expressed,
> Is his at last who says it best."

Such a distillation from the divine word, like that word itself, is the leaven which slowly, certainly, must pervade the whole mass until all is assimilated. "If the vision tarry, we must wait for it," remembering that—

> "Time's noblest offspring is the last."

The progress of the gospel is not always like the march of a well-disciplined army of invasion, gaining victories in every conflict, holding fast the strategic points it has captured, one by one, until the whole territory is occupied. It is rather like an oriental river issuing from perennial fountains and flowing on with a deepening and widening current until it encounters the desert sands into which it sinks and becomes apparently

a lost river, but only after awhile to reappear again and resume its onward flow.

Such a temporary arrest was seen when the era characterized by heroic men loyal to the truth, resolute in defending it, not counting their possessions or even their lives dear to them if secured by the sacrifice of principle, was followed by another, and, perhaps, the most spiritless, colorless, and unattractive era in British annals.

When we are enumerating the hindrances which retarded the influence of the Westminster Standards in awakening a spirit of universal and earnest evangelism, we must not forget to mention the almost mortal chill which came to the church from the rise of what was called the Moderate Party. It was a party destitute not only of heroic enterprise, but of the strong convictions which make heroic enterprise possible. Fifty years before Great Britain was in the noontide of intellectual and spiritual achievement. It was an era made luminous by a constellation of illustrious statesmen, jurists and divines—the era of Milton and Hampden and Bunyan, of *Paradise Lost* and the *Pilgrim's Progress* and the *Saints' Everlasting Rest;* the era of consecrated soldiers of the country and of the cross, who marched to battle keeping step to the music of Psalms; when mighty theologians built up those massive systems of truth which no adversary could shake; when the gospel was preached with apostolic fervor, and the church, loyal to its King, stood like a palace built for God.

Then came the sad decline. There were, indeed, many sincere and devout men still surviving, but the majority of the divines of the day spent their lives, as we are told, in writing apologies for Christianity, in rhetorical tilts with infidels and papists, or in delivering moral lectures such as Seneca might have inspired, and

sermons which were feeble dilutions of Plato with the text from St. Paul.

But God had not forgotten to be gracious; the sand-sunken river was not a lost river. Like a breath from the everlasting hills came the evangelical revival of which Whitfield was the outstanding representative—at once the flower and crown, and with that time of refreshing came a return to the first love and to the first works inspired by that love, so that the wilderness and the solitary place were made glad again, and the desert rejoiced and blossomed as the rose.

I will not dwell on the early tentative missionary enterprises, whether undertaken by Protestant Hollanders or German Lutheran Pietists or zealous evangelists of Denmark, Sweden or the British Isles. Some of these well-meant endeavors were marred by misconceptions of the true theory of missions; some of them were migratory rather than missionary, emigrations to escape persecution, or colonial, to found new states where the hope of commercial advantages was the chief incentive, or where the religious instruction was superficial and vitiated by compromises with heathen rites and ceremonies, or where mercenary motives were the inducements to profess Christianity. And yet during all that era of imperfect comprehension of the true methods of mission work there were a few devout souls, far in advance of their time, who were filled with an unutterable longing to speed the cause of evangelization in ways which modern experience has proved to be the right ways of the Lord.

They failed because the age was not ready for them. There is something pathetic in such failures. They remind us of the strong swimmer unable to resist the multitudinous waves of the sea, and so, unheeded and unappreciated, they went down with their sublimest as-

pirations unfulfilled. That day, thank God, has passed. The man who has something to say and something generous to propose will get hearers and helpers, too, and will reap the reward of an influence multiplied by the co-operation of sympathetic co-workers, with a whole brotherhood about him, all swayed by one motive, all moving compactly to one end, like David's men keeping step with unbroken ranks in the march to conflict and victory. It is this which makes the present the most auspicious period of the world in which to live; it is this which makes each individual life worth more to its possessor and to the public than ever before. It is something to thank God for when one lives at a time when the church regards itself a divinely organized missionary society, whose chief aspiration is the conversion of the world.

The true theory of missions is one that clearly recognizes the fact that the great head of the church has not only committed to it the truths necessary to salvation, but has provided it with the government, the laws, the offices, and the equipment for building up the kingdom of God and extending its conquests through the world. This is in accordance with the spirit and teaching of the Westminster Standards, in proof of which we need only quote their noble testimony: "Unto this catholic, visible church Christ has given the ministry, the oracles and ordinances of God for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life and to the end of the world; and this he doth by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, made effectual thereto." Thus are the scattered sheep "gathered" from the North and the South, the East and the West, into the safe and happy fold of the Good Shepherd.

By its divine constitution the church is, therefore,

qualified to secure all the spiritual ends for which it was instituted, and is in itself a missionary society of which every communicant is a member; and as each one has a recognized place in it because of its representative form of government, this very fact is calculated to enlist the sympathies, to deepen the sense of responsibility, and to stimulate to the most earnest, practical activity on the part of every member of the great household of faith.

The coronation of the true missionary method came when the great principle, so long latent in the Westminster Standards, or finding only partial recognition, received its noblest expression when the Church of Scotland because the first church after the Reformation to send forth missionaries under its own immediate appointment, thus setting its solemn seal to the truth that the church, by its constitution and divinely-ordained purpose, was a society for the maintenance and extension of the kingdom of God throughout the whole world.

The second church, in its organized, ecclesiastical capacity, to recognize this obligation was the Presbyterian Church of the United States.

The Rev. Dr. John H. Rice, professor in the Union Theological Seminary, Virginia, near the close of his life dictated an overture to be sent to the General Assembly of 1831, with a preamble, asserting that it was the primary and chief object of the institution of the church to communicate the blessings of the gospel to the world with the efficiency of united effort, and this was followed by a series of resolutions, the first of which was, "That *the Presbyterian Church in the United States is a missionary society*, and every member of the church is a life member of the same, and bound in maintenance of his Christian character to do all in his power for the accomplishment of that object." Another resolution enjoined

upon church sessions in admitting new members to state distinctly to the candidates that they were joining a community the object of which was the conversion of the heathen world, and to impress on their minds a deep sense of their obligation, as redeemed sinners, to co-operate in the accomplishment of the great object of Christ's own mission to mankind.

Wonderful has been the change in the aspect of the foreign mission field since the adoption of that principle. A new hope, like a star, has risen on the vision of the church, and the splendid result has been the planting of the cross among the kindreds and tongues of every continent of the globe, and in numberless islands of the sea. The glowing anticipations of Isaiah are finding their historic fulfilment, as the spiritual deserts of the earth blossom as the rose, and the solitary places, so long silent, rejoice with joy and singing in the light and warmth of the coming kingdom.

At the meeting of our alliance last summer in Glasgow, Professor Lindsay said it would be well if that Council could give to all the various churches represented in it an account of the great work that Presbyterians, as a corporate body, were doing for the heathen nations, and among other things informed them that the Presbyterian churches do more than a fourth of the whole mission work among the heathen that is done by all the Protestant churches together. He also mentions by name, though not invidiously, three great denominations, and asserts that the Presbyterian Church is doing more in the foreign field than all of them combined.

It is well, also, to keep our people informed of the fact that after the Reformation of the sixteenth century all the Reformed churches of the world, with the exception of the Anglican and Lutheran, adopted the Presbyterian

system of doctrine and form of church government, and now those who hold that faith and form throughout Europe, America and the Orient, constitute the largest Protestant denomination on the globe. It surprises many of our own people to be told this because they are accustomed to measure the numerical strength of Presbyterianism everywhere by what they know to be true in our own country, where at least two denominations greatly outnumber our own; and because many large organizations, both in Europe and America, while not *called* Presbyterian are strictly so. They may be known by different names; they may be called Waldensian, or Bohemian, or Dutch, or they may bear, as many of them do, nothing more than the title, "Reformed," but they all are as truly Presbyterian as those which are known by that name, and when the members and adherents of these different branches of the one family are enumerated it is ascertained that the Presbyterian is the largest Protestant church in christendom. It is true mere numbers do not prove orthodoxy, but they become an important factor in determining the progress of a denomination and its hold on the public conscience as well as in forecasting its advancement and widening influence in the future. It is deeply gratifying to note the approval which other denominations give to the distinctive characteristics of Presbyterianism. This approval may not be expressed in words, but it is tacitly given, and is an endorsement as far as it goes. The Baptists agree with us in our views of ministerial parity. Episcopalians and Methodists are in accord with us as to the subjects and mode of baptism. The Baptist Church is, in the main, a Calvinist church, and so is the Episcopal if the Thirty-nine Articles express its doctrinal belief. And what concerns us more just now is the virtual testimony of other de-

nominations to the value of an officer like the ruling elder in the missionary field. The Presbyterian Church is the only one that recognizes and makes constant and efficient use of that officer both in home and foreign enterprises. When its ministers are driven away by persecution or removed by death, the work need not cease while ordained elders are there to gather the converts, and read and expound to them the truths of God's word and to exhort them to be steadfast in the faith of the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and to pray and hope for the time when under-shepherds may be restored to guide and nurture the flock.

In all Protestant non-Presbyterian denominations there is an ever-growing tendency towards a representative church government in which the lay element is a factor; and in the foreign field among such churches there is a conscious want of such an agency as that which the eldership of the Presbyterian Church supplies, as is demonstrated by the fact that substitutes for such offices are called into service to give new stability and efficiency to missionary work.

Thus in our Standards there are, doubtless, other latent principles, unappreciated because unrecognized, until in the providence of God new conditions and new exigencies arise which compel attention to their value among all Christian men who are ready to welcome and make practical use of any methods, no matter from what source they come, by which their work is accelerated and crowned with greater success. Not only are these principles potent in aggressive work, but they anticipate and antagonize errors which at the time of the Westminster Assembly had no existence. Among these may be mentioned the modern theory of "the larger hope," or "second probation" for the heathen in the world to

come—a theory calculated to weaken the conviction of the need of missions among the heathen, and thus to abate the efforts of the church to maintain them. Our Standards give no intimation of another opportunity to hear the gospel between death and the resurrection. In the case of the righteous they assert that their souls are made perfect at death and do immediately pass into glory. In the case of the wicked they pass into the abode of the lost, where they remain reserved to the judgment of the great day, "when they shall have the fearful but just sentence of condemnation pronounced against them." As surely as sentence is pronounced it will be executed, and as the result the wicked "shall be cast out from the favorable presence of God and forever separated from the fellowship and glory of Christ and of his saints and of the holy angels."

Among the missionary enterprises of the eighteenth century the most interesting, to us at least, are those which contemplated the evangelization of the aborigines of our own continent.

These efforts possess a pathetic and almost tragic interest because undertaken in behalf of a people who were once the sole owners of the vast domain now occupied by the imperial States of the American Union—a domain of which they were dispossessed partly by aggressive wars and partly by the vices of civilization grafted upon the depravity of savage life; and because whole tribes of the people so despoiled have become extinct, while the remnants, still surviving, are steadily diminishing notwithstanding the philanthropic efforts made to arrest that decline.

The translation of the Bible into the language of one of the Indian tribes by Eliot demands our attention, because it was accomplished under embarrassments greater

than existed in the case of any other translator who ever rendered the Holy Scriptures into the vernacular of any people. There is not a vestige of that tribe now on earth. There is not a human being who can now read Eliot's Bible; and yet its translation was not love's labor lost. That Bible has no readers, but the very language in which its blessed truths were expressed is remembered among the redeemed and glorified who here on earth learned to chant its Psalms and adore the Saviour it revealed. The book is silent evermore, but its story of redemption is still celebrated in immortal songs.

The late Dr. William Graham, professor in the Presbyterian College of London, during a visit to this country, made a tour through the New England States and took Northampton in his way that he might see the place so tenderly associated with the last hours of David Brainerd. Dr. Graham published a sketch of that wonderful man, one of the best of the many that have appeared. Few have seen the periodical in which it was published. Dr. Graham says: "Three things have made the name of Brainerd memorable—his biography by Jonathan Edwards, his eulogy by Robert Hall, and his influence on Henry Martyn, to whom he was a Protestant patron saint." The missionary annals of the world furnish us with few accounts of such privations as are recorded of him—thorns exceedingly sharp, but blossoming into flowers of saintly purity and sweetness. Renouncing positions where he might have found congenial companionship and comfort as well as usefulness, he chose the solitary, self-denying life of a missionary among the Indian savages; a lonely, consumptive man, living in a wigwam, sleeping on a bed of straw, eating mouldy bread or sour cakes prepared by his own hand. His experience of the most effectual way to reach the heart even of savage hearers is instruc-

tive. He found that the terrors of the law did not alarm them. They were men accustomed to brave all dangers without a tremor, but floods of tears flowed from their eyes at the recital of the love of him who came down to earth to seek the lost, and then went up to heaven to intercede for them. It must delight the brother who gave us that admirable address on the Catechisms of the church to be reminded that Brainerd, as his biographer tells us, lodged the Shorter Catechism in the minds of these wild men of the woods, knowing that solid piles of doctrine must be driven into the swampy soil of the Indian mind before any firm foundation could be secured for the erection of a permanent superstructure.

Worn out with toil, he went to Northampton, the home of Jonathan Edwards, to die in the twenty-ninth year of his age. During the closing days of that life of privation he was tenderly ministered to by the daughter of the great theologian to whom he had been betrothed, and still more tenderly ministered to by One who, above all others, had loved him and above all others was beloved in return by the dying saint, until he passed away *in pace* and *in pacem.* Two graves, moss-grown and fir-shaded, more than any others around them, touched the heart of the English pilgrim with the pathos both of human and divine love, and these were the graves of Brainerd and that of the girl he loved, but did not live to marry.

Having endeavored to delineate the relation of the Westminster Standards to Foreign Missions, more especially in their influence in developing the great principles which in our day and in our own church have made the work of universal evangelization at once conservative and aggressive, and successful, too, just in proportion to their conformity with apostolic models and methods, I conclude the discourse with a brief portraiture of

two typical men, in whom the principles discussed found their illustration and embodiment.

The first missionary since the Reformation sent forth by any church in its corporate capacity and ordained to labor in the foreign field was Alexander Duff, whose name stands as a synonym of whatever is heroic, self-sacrificing and saintly in missionary character and achievement. His personal history has all the charm of romance, heightened by the additional charm of being not only a hallowed, but a veritable, history.

Born in a valley overlooked by the peaks of Beni-vrackie, hard by the battle-field where the crafty and cruel Claverhouse fell mortally wounded, his imagination in early youth touched by the weird, wild songs of Dugald Buchanan—the Ossian of the highlands—and his heart filled with the deeper emotions enkindled by the visions of the Apocalypse and the triumphant songs of the innumerable multitude, he himself in later life ascribed to these influences the impressions which gave color, tone and direction to much that was characteristic of him in after years.

Of the effective use he made of these early associations we have an illustration in the memorable address he made before the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland in 1850, twenty-one years after his ordination as a missionary to India, when he told his audience of the emotion with which he had listened in his boyhood to Jacobite songs, and his romantic devotion to "Prince Charlie," and then vividly picturing the enthusiasm with which youthful warriors from "bracken, bush and glen" rallied to their standards and of how the gory beds and cold, grassy winding sheets of Culloden Muir bore testimony to the intensity of their loyalty to an earthly prince, he appealed to Highland fathers and

mothers to show a deeper, diviner loyalty in joyously consecrating their sons to the service of the King of kings.

Of course, I cannot present even an outline of Dr. Duff's splendid career in India; but as an orator, most impassioned and inspired when his theme was the greatness and the glory of the missionary enterprise, he has had no superior among all who have consecrated their lives to that supreme interest of the church. The enthusiasm aroused by his eloquent appeals to his countrymen after his return from India would seem to be exaggerations were they not attested by those who witnessed what has been reported. Probably great audiences have never been more thoroughly entranced by human speech since the days so graphically described by Macaulay, when in "the great hall of William Rufus which had resounded with acclamations at the inaugurations of thirty kings" Burke made the opening address "with an exuberance of thought and a splendor of diction," mingled with a pathos which stirred the deepest emotions of men of judicial gravity and sternest, stoical self-control, and the more impressible portion of his hearers to an excitation of feeling which there was no attempt to restrain.

So when Duff ended one of his impassioned appeals and the audience broke out into a tempest of enthusiastic applause, it was sometimes necessary to chasten and temper the high-wrought emotion by the voice of prayer by some venerable father called upon to lead the devotions of the Assembly.

The testimony of one competent to form such a judgment was that though it had been his privilege to hear Fox and Pitt speak in the House of Commons in the very zenith of their glory as statesmen and orators, he had never heard from either a speech surpassing one Dr. Duff had just delivered for loftiness of tone, for ar-

gumentative force, transcendent eloquence and overpowering impressiveness.

It was the happy privilege of Dr. Duff to come nearer to the solution of the controverted question than any one else who ever attempted it, with regard to the use of secular literature and science in the training of Hindoo young men in his schools in Calcutta. He learned how successfully to attack Hindoo superstitions by an English education in true science, every fact of such science being antagonistic to and subversive of some article in the Hindoo religion. But this was only preparing the way of the Lord. He well knew that every item of belief in a false religion might be annihilated, and then leave the student nothing more than a cultivated skeptic. His great reliance, therefore, after removing the rubbish and stumbling-blocks out of the way, was the preaching of Christ crucified, the wisdom of God and the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. Such was the work of this master-builder—a work solid in its foundation, safe in its superstructure, and certain to become demonstrably scriptural by the test of time. It was also the high distinction of Dr. Duff to be successful in a double vocation, that of being one of the wisest and most efficient of all workers in the foreign field, and also the instrument of arousing an intelligent and abiding enthusiasm among his countrymen at home. No returned missionary ever wrought such a revolution in public opinion, and no one ever sent back so many volunteers into the foreign field.

This gives him a unique place in missionary biography. Around his bier Christians of all confessions met. "For the first time in Scottish ecclesiastical history, the members of three kirks and their moderators, in person or through their representatives, trod the one funeral march," and throughout the world where the tidings of his de-

parture came, tears of sorrow at such a loss were mingled with thanksgivings that God had given to men such a missionary of the cross.

The Rev. Dr. Hampden C. Dubose has rendered a service for which the gratitude of the Christian public is due for publishing a memoir of Dr. John Leighton Wilson, "for eighteen years a missionary on the Western coast of Africa, and for thirty-three years secretary of foreign missions in his own country." Dr. Dubose, who has spent a large portion of his own life in the foreign field, was well qualified by experience and by the strong and tender affection he cherished for the subject of his memoir to compose a biography as deeply interesting as it is instructive and inspiriting. The author had the advantage of much valuable information furnished him by some of the most intimate friends and ardent admirers of Dr. Wilson. Among these he makes special mention of two contributions received from Drs. Adger and Dabney, and he awakens our sympathy for both in a single sentence full of pathos, in which he tell us that each of these communications was dictated to an amenuensis, inasmuch as both of the venerable contributors were afflicted with the loss of sight.

One of these now sits on this platform in view of this great audience, unseen by him; my class-mate and lifelong friend. I am comforted by the assurance that the darkness which envelops him is but the shadow of God's wing, beneath which he is all the nearer to his Father's side and heart; and he may say in words ascribed to another:

"Dear Lord, upon my bended knee,
I recognize thy purpose clearly shown;
My vision thou hast dimmed
That I might see
Thyself, thyself alone."

The biographer of Dr. Wilson tells us that in the year 1734 there came to America a colony of Presbyterians who settled in Williamsburg county, South Carolina, a godly community, with piety in the home, piety in the school, and spiritual worship in the church—a community of Christian households, in which daughters were trained to industry and virtue, and sons taught to speak the truth, to fear the face of no man, and to do that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

The father of Leighton Wilson was a planter, whose home was the abode of plenty, contentment, and social enjoyment; ordinarily filled with guests attracted by the generous hospitality for which men of his class were famed. There the boy was early developed in physical health and vigor by the free, out-door life he lived—fishing, hunting, riding, and engaging in all the athletic sports in which the sons of planters in easy circumstances in that day delighted, whether in forest, field, or stream. It was by manly pastimes like these, in a climate that invited to out-door life all the year round, that he gained the great stature to which he attained; the deep, broad chest, and the physical vigor which never failed him either on the African coast or in the close confinement of the mission rooms.

In the history of Dr. Duff we saw how the environments of his youth had much to do in giving tone and color to his character and in shaping the course of his subsequent life. In his boyhood the influence of picturesque scenery; the harmonies of nature heard in winds and waterfalls and the songs of birds; the weird traditions of primitive times; the wild minstrelsy of native bards; the haunted glen; the ivy-mantled ruin—all these touched his fancy and charmed the inward eye with the visions of romance.

The surroundings of Wilson in his boyhood were very different, but none the less potent. The songs most familiar to his ear were plantation songs in the happy harvest time, and still oftener the melodious and mighty chorus of voices of the negro worshippers in the crowded church or in the ample grove, lit up at night by flaming pine torches. One of the uncles of Leighton Wilson was a man whose counsels in church courts and whose instructive sermons, full of heavenly unction, gave him a wide influence. He was especially happy in his discourses to the colored people, in whose spiritual welfare he took the liveliest interest. In return, their affection for him was most fervent. They flocked to him from neighboring plantations on communion Sabbaths, and when the services were over they crowded around him to grasp his hand, and lingered long after the benediction. Now we see the formative and directive influence of early associations. It was the profound interest in the colored people of this uncle, under whose roof young Wilson once spent a winter, that his own missionary enthusiasm was kindled for the natives of the dark continent. Familiar as he was with the habits and peculiarities of the negro race, among whom he was born and with whom he found his first playmates, he was thus, in the providence of God, trained for the splendid service to which he devoted the prime of his life on the western coast of Africa. There is no time now to speak of his labors there as a teacher, translator, naturalist, and linguist; of his perils by fever, flood and cannibals; of his loneliness and depression of spirits from the death of colleagues; but in this connection it may be well to say something with regard to one of his memorable achievements. The English, French, Portuguese, Spaniards and Americans were all at one time actively engaged in

the slave trade. Almost at the end of the seventeenth century the number exported from the coast during the year 1798 was not less than one hundred thousand. When public opinion was aroused in Great Britain and the United States, and a effort made to suppress the nefarious traffic, a British squadron was placed on the coast of Africa, but those interested in the continuance of the trade made strenuous opposition to the retention of the fleet on the coast, the argument being that it was inefficient and had failed to guard the coast or capture the slave-trading vessels. It was at this juncture that Dr. Wilson's intervention became effectual. His biographer states that Dr. Wilson prepared a paper demonstrating the efficiency of the blockade, and sent it to a wealthy merchant in Bristol, who placed it in the hands of Lord Palmerston. The premier directed that an edition of ten thousand copies should be printed and widely distributed in prominent circles. "The monogram proved that the squadron had accomplished a great deal, and urged that only the fastest ships should be stationed on the coast. Lord Palmerston informed Dr. Wilson that after the publication of his article all opposition in England to the retention of the African squadron ceased. And thus the long night of woe to the unhappy sons of Darkest Africa ended, and the dawn of a brighter day was ushered in. For this consummation Dr. Wilson toiled, and prayed, and then rejoiced."

Dr. Wilson had little of the sentiment, the romance, the brilliancy or the magnetic power so conspicuous in Dr. Duff, but his characteristics were these: simplicity, humility, transparency, candor, courage, decision, consecration and heavenly-mindedness. Those who knew him most intimately will testify that every one of these traits were well-defined in him and so blended as to form

a combination of beautiful and attractive symmetry. It may be said of him as of the prophet Elisha, "a man of God," "a holy man of God."

Dr. Dubose closes his charming memoir by saying: "During the last months of his life his experience was not that of the valley and shadow of which the Psalmist spake, but it was rather that of the prophet who had led his people out of Egyptian bondage, and who, standing on Pisgah's summit, looked across the plains of Canaan to Mount Zion and to the General Assembly of the first born."

One of the most pleasing incidents in the history of our late council in the city of Glasgow was an address from the eastern section of the Executive Commission of the Œcumenical Methodist Conference, so cordial in its tone, so appreciative of our principles and their influence in the work of the world's evangelization, that I cannot refrain from referring to a portion of it:

"It is with especial gratification that we recall in the presence of so many of its distinguished representatives our manifold debts to the historic Presbyterian Church, it being preëminently Protestant. Your great church has been of necessity a witnessing church, and has gained one of its chief distinctions in going forth 'unto Jesus without the camp, bearing his reproach.' It has been given to you 'not only to believe in Christ, but also to suffer for his sake.' Your church has furnished the memorable and inspiriting spectacle, not simply of a solitary heroic soul here and there, but of generations of faithful souls ready, for the sake of Christ and his truth, to go cheerfully to prison and to death. This rare honor you rightly esteem as the most precious part of your priceless heritage.

"And we further glory in the thought that the great

Presbyterian Church can never cease to be evangelical, since it has become so intensely evangelistic. Taking the world over, Presbyterianism in the future must be looked to as one of the very greatest and most beneficent forces for the Christian conversion and evangelization of the generations of mankind on every continent. We do unfeignedly rejoice as we behold your goodly array of churches giving the noblest of their sons, and consecrating their vast resources of learning and wealth to the greatest, the mightiest of all enterprises, the conversion of the world to Christ, assured that he shall yet 'reign from the river to the ends of the earth.'"

"We close," says the address, "as we began, by praying that the Master's presence may be in all your assemblies; that he may prosper all your undertakings; that he may make 'all grace to abound toward you,' until your cherished ideal of 'a free church in a free state' shall in every nation under heaven be an accomplished fact, and every citizen be taught that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever."

REV. SAMUEL M. SMITH, D. D.

IX.

THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO CURRENT POPULAR THEOLOGY AND THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE.

BY

REV. SAMUEL M. SMITH, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT COLUMBIA, SOUTH CAROLINA.

ANALYSIS.

The theme a comparison.—The Westminster symbols and current theology.—This theology a type of thought.—Its terms vague.—Its attitude negative.—Abuses conservative theology.—Familiar terms in new senses.—Peculiar to no church.—Has no one leader.—Each a leader.—Good men among them.—Views held debated.—This theology professes to be biblical.—Yet makes little use of Scripture.—Claims to be spiritual and ethical.—Claim questioned.—Discontent its bond.—Dislikes systematic theology.—Calvinism still more.—The divine immanence its source.—Schleiermacher its father.—Spinoza its ancestor.—German philosophy its friends.—Its three features.—Mysticism.—Pantheism.—Rationalism.—Philosophical survey.—Summary.—Its doctrine of immanence vague.—Tends to pantheism.—Miracle minimized.—Distinction between natural and supernatural obscured.—Drummond alluded to.—Progressive revelation.—Revelation a process.—Inspiration modified.—Beecher criticised.—Leads to radical criticism.—Literary freedom.—Christ's mission.—Progressive revelation.—The incarnation.—The person of Christ.—The solidarity of the race.—Election rejected.—Atonement explained away.—Doctrine of sin.—View of redemption.—The race idea.—Anthropology and sote riology inverted.—Christian consciousness exalted.—Divine immanence.—Comparative religion.—Natural law.—Process everywhere.—Eschatology reconstructed.—Current literature scanned.—Broader views given.—Grace and law.—Restorationism favored.—The pale ghost of a spiritualized pantheism.—Special discussion.—The divine fatherhood.—Confusion—Natural and spiritual fatherhood.—Conservative theology correct.—Sovereignty first.—Fatherhood next.—Scripture favors.—Passages quoted.—Expounded.—True spiritual sonship shown.—The incarnation emphasized.—The atonemont ignored.—The life of Christ more than his death.—Christ revealer only.—Not redeemer.—Prophet, not priest.—Scripture puts stress on his death.—So early preaching.—The cross.—Christocentric theology.—Back to Christ.—Plausible, but puerile.—Calvinism never left Christ.—The Scripture teaching.—Sin a fact.—Sincentric theology.—Calvinism rightly theocentric.—Doctrine of Christian consciousness.—Current theology reproduces Schleiermacher.—Quotations.—Bible shorn of its authority.—Christian consciousness a figment.—A folly.—Catechism for the new theology.—The Calvinism of the Standards must stand against it.—This will meet the needs of the future.

IX.

THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO CURRENT POPULAR THEOLOGY AND THE NEEDS OF THE FUTURE.

THE topic assigned me deals with a comparison, the terms of which are the Westminster symbols on the one hand, and the current popular theology on the other. The first term of this comparison has been presented already with great clearness and with signal ability by the distinguished speakers who have preceded me, so that it may be safely assumed that at this stage of our programme the audience has a clear and comprehensive conception of the contents and the character of these great symbols; when the distinctive features and salient points of the current popular theology of the day shall have been set forth, the comparison will have been instituted, the relation between the two will be self-evident, and the part the Westminster Standards must play in the needs of the future will appear implicit in the comparison, needing, if anything, emphasis only.

Let it be said in the outset that there are certain characteristics common to this theology that need to be noted; some of them to be constantly remembered, inasmuch as they greatly embarrass any attempt to give an exact and concise statement of the views therein advanced.

Bear in mind, then, that it represents a tendency rather than any clearly-defined system of doctrine or dis-

tinctly-formulated creed; it is more like a school of thought in what seems to be a transition period. All its deliverances are more or less vague, its terms indefinite and uncertain. It is negative rather than positive, consisting chiefly in the criticism of existing systems, far more successful in the discovery of weakness than in the development of strength, more alert and acute in the emphasis of alleged existing difficulties and objections than capable and effective in the removal of them, telescopic and microscopic alike in the vision of defects, but myopic to a degree in the vision of any remedies that really remedy.

Its representatives set forth with great vigor and great plainness the faults of the conservative theology, and they assume with equal positiveness an immense superiority in behalf of the new, but just wherein exactly this assumed superiority consists they fail with any definiteness to show.

The natural effect of this vagueness is, moreover, heightened by a free and frequent use of terms long familiar and inseparably associated with certain fixed, definite ideas; but they invest these terms with a new and a different meaning, using them in a way—

> "That palters with us in a double sense,
> That keeps the word of promise to our ear
> And breaks it to our hope."

The casual reader is very likely to be misled by such use of the familiar terms; and failing to discriminate is often surprised and sometimes somewhat indignant at what he conceives to be unjust and uncharitable criticism. It has no lines of theological or ecclesiastical demarcation; it runs through all churches and has its representatives in all schools of theology. It is a sort of theological cave of Adullam into which every man

that hath any quarrel with his creed doth resort with great gladness and not seldom with some noise.

It owns, however, no David; recognizes no master; has no accredited representatives authorized to speak for it; puts forth no confession of its faith to which appeal may be made. Exactly what the Westminster symbols teach is within the compass of any intelligence willing to study these Standards, but when one turns to the popular theology of the day, what shall be his guide? Its advocates well illustrate what one of their number aptly styles the Freedom of Faith. The only way to arrive at the views held by this school is to collect and collate the deliverances of its most prominent and active exponents, remembering always that no one is entitled to speak for any other; any one of them may, with all honesty of heart, repudiate the deliverances of all others and earnestly contend that such views do not represent the new theology, while with equal right any and all others may refuse recognition to *his* views. Each representative writes as if he carried the whole Progressive Theology immediately under the crown of his own hat. This fact I wish to emphasize in order to guard against individual injustice, and because, moreover, it affords opportunity distinctly to recognize that among the adherents of this current popular theology are found not only men of diverse views, but also of very different dispositions and characters, among them some of sweet spirit and devout consecration and effective service for God and man. Let it be remembered that we deal not with the characters of such, but only with doctrinal views. Could such men control the discussion I should have less to say in criticism; could such characters counteract the effect of such views we should have less to fear; but alas! they cannot; however sweet-spirited

men may be, logic is relentless; a conclusion is not greatly affected by the character of him who furnishes its premises, and these shining exceptions are sometimes contributing to results from which they would shrink in horror, while their amiable and excellent character serves only to aggravate the evil. It must be said also, that men of this stamp are not sufficiently numerous or active to exercise any considerable influence on the discussion; for *it* assuredly is, in the main, anything but sweet-spirited and amiable, and is marked by a conspicuous absence of certain characteristics of the wisdom that is from above; even if it be granted that conservative theology has been overtaken in its faults, it can scarcely be claimed that this effort to restore it has been especially marked by a spirit of meekness.

One of the most constant characteristics of the discussion is the absence of Scripture citation. This is the more remarkable and peculiar when we remember that the new theology claims for itself a preëminently biblical character as one of its distinctive differentiæ, distinguishing it from that of such symbols as the Westminster, which is asserted to be scholastic rather than biblical, while the new claims to be exactly the reverse; but one misses greatly that constant resort to the *ipsissima verba* of sacred Scripture which conservative theology has made so familiar; we have, instead, some argument, many assertions, a multitude of assumptions, but rarely ever a Scripture text; our progressive brethren profess great reverence for the spirit of Scripture, but they make scant appeal to its letter; they seem to write under the conviction that "the letter killeth," and not without cause; for if there is a single readjustment of theirs that can survive an appeal to the letter of God's word, I have failed utterly to find it.

Besides claiming to be more biblical, it claims also

to be more ethical, more evangelical, more spiritual; asserts "an increasing frankness," "a deepening sincerity," "a deepening spirituality"; but this deepening sincerity does not seem to abridge the liberty its representatives exercise in the interpretation of their ostensible creeds, nor does their superior spirituality prevent their drawing the stipend of a church whose windows they break from the inside; in view of which facts they lay themselves liable to the suspicion of having misplaced their somewhat vaunted "elasticity," inasmuch as it seems to lie not so much in the creed as in the conscience.

Having noticed that this current theology has no lines of demarcation, we remark finally in this connection that it has apparently no bond of union save that of discontent; the spirit of the Melancholy Dane, without his melancholy, however:

> "The times are out of joint; Oh! cursed spite
> That ever I was born to set them right."

In this spirit they are in heartiest accord, except that they do not seem to consider it a cursed spite that devolves the duty; it is on the contrary a self-elected task and one pursued thoroughly *con amore*. Amid all differences there is one thing in which they are all and altogether, absolutely, cordially unanimous, viz.: that conservative theology is in desperate need of a renascence, and that it is their mission to meet this need; they agree very heartily in an inveterate and virulent dislike of all systematic theology in general and of Calvinism in particular.

Searching for some advantageous starting-point for a brief but comprehensive survey of the whole field, I conceive the doctrine of the divine immanence to furnish our best approach; this rather than any other impresses

me as the regulative principle of the whole, so far as it has any regulative principle; here, if anywhere, we shall find a unifying element. It is a doctrine derived, doubtless, from Schleiermacher, who, more than any other, may be considered the father of this new school,[1] This very able and very distinguished man is a theological paradox, one of the most wonderful eclectics the world has ever seen, blending in his fervent soul and brilliant brain more contradictories of feeling and of thought than any other one man, possibly, of this prolific century. His earliest, deepest, most abiding impressions were derived from the Moravians; his association with them gave a devoutness to his feeling and his thought which was never afterwards lost. Then followed the fascinating influence of Spinoza's brilliant genius which graved an indelible impress into the very heart of his philosophy. Spinoza dominates Schleiermacher's thinking.

We then have superimposed upon these two fundamental, coördinate impresses the then young, though regnant, philosophy of that day: Plato, Descartes, Kant, Lessing, Fichte, Hegel and Schelling. These all enter influentially into Schleiermacher's philosophic makeup, and all leave distinct traces of their influence on him. So that we have in this wonderful man the well-nigh incredible blending of three utterly diverse elements, each of the three decidedly marked and wonderfully dis-

[1] Of course, I would not be misunderstood as ignoring the influence of other leaders more modern and far more prominent in the public eye. I desire to go to the *fountain* whence all these later, lesser streams flow. If one wishes to understand the true character of this so-called *new* theology, let him study this light which dawned in 1768.

" . . . . *micat inter omnes*
. . . . *velut inter ignes*
Luna minores."

tinct, viz.: *Mysticism*, *Pantheism*, *and Rationalism*. If called upon to combine them into one compound, we should be compelled to call him a mystic, pantheistic rationalist! For though he began by putting imperious conclusion to the long conflict between reason and faith by the simple process of ordering the former off the field, cutting the Gordian knot of rationalistic difficulties by peremptorily ruling reason as an authority out of the realm of religion utterly, yet by a *bouleversement* most remarkable he ended by presenting the world, in the name of theology, a philosophy simon pure and one virtually and radically rationalistic at that!

We have not space here for any attempt at a survey or analysis of this system of religious philosophy; suffice it to say with utmost brevity, that tried by the Standards prevailing in this presence, he is, in our judgment at least, not sound on a single doctrine. The relevance of this statement appears when we state our conviction that every distinctive feature of the current popular theology reveals Schleiermacher's influence; reveals it very distinctly, sometimes very directly. He occupies practically, though not formally, substantially the same position in the new theology that Calvin does in the reformed. One of the most eminent and learned advocates of the former says unequivocally: "Schleiermacher still utters the truth to which all that is highest in modern Christianity responds."

Schleiermacher's doctrine of the divine immanence is simply Spinoza's pantheism spiritualized, and in the new theology the same doctrine appears clearly reflected, the color remains distinct, simply paled into a lighter shade. The descent of the doctrine is very direct; Schleiermacher is its father and Spinoza its grandfather; one who knows its paternal ancestry would, in any theo-

logical court, unhesitatingly swear to the legitimacy of the offspring; it carries its credentials in its very countenance.

Just what this doctrine means in the mouths of its advocates, we find it impossible to state with any confidence. The terms and references are of the vaguest and most indefinite kind. They allege in very general terms that the conservative school teaches a God remote, removed from the world, shut out from his creation, whereas the new reveals a God near at hand, the former a God isolated, the latter a God in close connection; they emphasize as the difference and the defect of the orthodox theology that it teaches a transcendent God, the progressive, an immanent God; when we endeavor, however, to discover more definitely the exact difference between the two, according to the claims of the progressives, we find ourselves utterly at fault for lack of anything even distantly approaching clear definition. Exact definition is something the new theology seems to abhor as much as the devil is popularly supposed to abhor holy water, and which it avoids as uniformly as it does Scripture citation. In all the terms that make any show of distinguishing between what its writers mean by this immanence and what they are pleased to call the transcendence of the old theology, their immanence takes on the complexion of pantheism and reveals the traces of Spinoza's influence on the great father of their school. All of their boasted advance on the conservative doctrine is in the direction of pantheism. I may be permitted to interject here that in my judgment this is inevitable; for I believe that the conservative doctrine so far from teaching a God remote, teaches, on the contrary, a connection so close and intimate that none can be closer; the only alternative is pantheism or the practical merg-

ing of the identity of God in that of the universe. While it may not be strictly just to call their doctrine of the divine immanence pantheism, we feel perfectly safe in saying that it is pantheistic. Let us proceed, however, to our consideration of this doctrine as the regulative principle of the new theology.

According to it, God is in some mysterious way undefined and, perhaps indefinable, so actually, intimately, closely interposed with some sort of a constant, habitual, ordinary connection with the world both of nature and of grace, that there is no need and there can be no place for any extraordinary interposition—or "interruption" as they prefer to style it—and hence the miracle becomes a superfluity and an impertinence. Some would do away with the miraculous entirely, as Schleiermacher does in the Gospels, sweeping away every miracle in the narrative, admitting into his whole scheme two only: the miracle of the creation, and the miracle of the Christ. Few go so far as this, but there is among them all a marked disposition to minimize the miraculous; a disposition often not least influential when unavowed, appearing frequently in incidental comment upon the miracles themselves or in innocent and insinuative paraphrase of the narrative containing them.

God being so intimately immanent, and that, too, by virtue of so constant, so habitual, so ordinary a connection, the distinction between the natural and the supernatural is greatly obscured, in many instances virtually, if not formally, obliterated. Schleiermacher himself recognized no difference whatever between natural and revealed religion, the natural is supernatural, and the supernatural natural; not many are so extreme as the great leader, but there is in the whole school a constant tendency to eliminate the supernatural, and this in every

department and in every direction. According to the explanations and interpretations of this school a modern Nicodemus would have small occasion ever to ask, How can these things be? and the natural man will be amply capable of receiving and knowing all these things, for they are very naturally discerned. This tendency to eliminate the supernatural is at once indicated, promoted, and measured by one of the popular fads of the day, the craze for analogies that has prevailed now for some years—a movement that finds its full flower in the brilliant fancies and corruscating word-play of such writers as the late Henry Drummond.

From the same seminal source develops also the conception of a progressive revelation—though I must record here my protest against such palpable perversion of the word revelation—that the revelation of God to man is "a continuous process through the reason, through experience, through the courses of history, or through the events and discipline of life," a gradual unfolding of knowledge under favoring auspices, a perfectly simple and a perfectly natural process, reducing what we have been wont to call divine inspiration to mere illumination, the product of spirituality, differing in degree not in kind, the only difference between those who still continue to be called the inspired writers and the devout of later ages lying in surroundings and circumstances, or what this pretentious period loves to call "environment." Which age has the advantage is a matter for each student to determine for himself; some saying that the advantage lies preëminently with the disciples and apostles of our Lord, while other some modestly affirm with Henry Ward Beecher that they believe what Paul, *e. g.*, would have believed had he lived in this day! The logic of the position is most evidently on the side of the

latter class; revelation being like everything else a process, going on under the influence of an immanent God, it presumably improves with every age under the great law of progressive development; with any such view of revelation it is simply absurd and childish to shrink from the implication that Beecher knew more of Christ than Paul.

From this it is only a step, and a very short step, that ushers us into the whole field of the most radical criticism and that both explains and justifies all its methods and all its results. We need feel no surprise, we should experience no shock at the freedom with which the sacred record is treated, is amended, is corrected, is improved generally. Its sacredness has been "developed" out of it; what claim has it for any special reverence? Of course, critics who enjoy the advantage of a continuous revelation cannot be reasonably expected to hesitate at amending the utterances of men who are nearly twenty centuries behind the present stage of revelation; and hence we say that the most radical criticism is only the logical and inevitable outcome of the dominant principle of the whole school.

Closely allied with this is the view entertained of Christ's mission into the world; it is the paramount expression of this immanence or the culminating stage of the progressive revelation of the immanent God. (The only difficulty being in the fact that the revelation seems still to progress after its culmination!) "The life of Christ was not the humiliation of the Son of God, the divine glory concealed, as it were, behind a veil." On the contrary, "He was the revelation of God in his absolute glory," and we are told that "when Schleiermacher discovered this as by a revelation, the unveiled glory of God, the thought of ages, was reversed." Ac-

cording to this view of his mission, Christ is the inevitable and the natural flower of God's revealing purpose; the necessary outcome of the divine immanence, its complement and its consummation.

Such being the character and the purpose of Christ's mission, the incarnation leading and intended to lead to a more perfect and a more permanent immanence, we have resulting some very peculiar views of the incarnation of Christ, not as the "taking to himself a true body and a reasonable soul," but as a union with the human race, a sort of infusion or injection of the divine into the race, a species of genetic, organic, permanent connection of God with mankind, with the race as a race, just as close in its connection as was that of Adam. Here again, and for the same reason as heretofore, we cannot define; but the new theology refers very emphatically and quite frequently to some such mysterious, generic union whereby the divine immanence is by Christ's incarnation rendered still more intimately and effectively immanent, with certain very decided doctrinal developments.

(1), There emerges somewhere and somehow a somewhat, which they call "The Solidarity of the Race," which broadens the scope of Christ's work to the utter annihilation of all such narrowness as election, limited atonement, and the like.

"If it is a fallen world, it is also a redeemed world; if it is a lost world, it is also a saved world; the Christ is no less to it than Adam; the divine humanity is no smaller than the Adamic humanity; the Spirit is as powerful and as universal as sin; the links that bind the race to evil are correlated by links equally strong binding it to righteousness."

There is a certain sense in which that language might be used by conservative theology, though it would de-

serve to be considered loose writing in any sense; that the *looseness*, however, is not simply in the style is made evident by the paragraph which immediately follows it:

> "It (*i. e.*, the new theology) goes in a certain manner with the old theology in its views of common evil, but it diverges from it in its conceptions of the redemptive and delivering forces by ascribing to them corresponding sweep. To repeat: it does not admit that Christ is less to the race than Adam, that the gospel is smaller than evil. . . . . It allies itself with the thought of the present age and the best thought of all ages; that mankind is moved by common forces, and follows common tendencies, falling and rising together in all good and ill desert, verifying the phrase, 'the life of humanity.'"

The uniform use of the word "race," or its equivalent, is the key to the foregoing paragraphs; the incarnation brings about an organic connection between Christ and the race; the union is a racial, not a personal union. This is the far-reaching significance of the phrase, "solidarity of the race."

(2), A second doctrinal result of this phase of the divine immanence is that by this generic union of the divine with the human there is exerted such a moral and spiritual influence upon the race as to render the conservative view of the corruption and depravity of our nature an anachronism and an absurdity; it, therefore, revolutionizes the whole of anthropology and soteriology, and of necessity very materially modifies the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and of his work.

(3), A third distinct result of this view of the divine immanence, in its influence on the effects of the incarnation, is seen in the begetting and development of the modern doctrine of the Christian consciousness, as it is called, with all its fruitage. This doctrine is reserved for special consideration at a later stage of my address.

This divine immanence, entering into the human race as a race, being as wide in its scope and as universal in its energy as the limits of mankind, the logical consequence is that God reveals himself to and allies himself with all peoples, in all ages, and in every quarter of the world, the only difference being in somewhat differing degrees of clearness; Christianity has no more inherent affinity, no closer connection, with Judaism than with any and all other ancient systems. It is merely the resultant of a development going on under the steady influence of the divine immanence. Christianity, they are fond of saying, comes not to destroy, but to fulfil, and this with reference to all the vast variety of heathen mythologies, not a whit less than with reference to Judaism. All the so-called science of comparative religions is a logical outcome, and you will find it figuring naturally and prominently in the new theology, with not a hint that Judaism is any more divine in its origin than Buddhism.

Under the dominant influence of this conception of the divine immanence, you discover on all hands and in increasing measure the disposition to bring every department of Christian doctrine, and every phase of religious experience, all of providence and all of grace, under the dominion of one great natural law, that of progressive development; revelation is a process, the incarnation is a process, the atonement is a process, regeneration is a process, justification is a process, probation is a process, judgment is a process. The entire field of eschatology needs revision and restatement; death is not decisive of destiny, there is no limit in time or eternity to probation, to discipline, to development. This latter you will remember as one of the first departures of the new theology to arrest attention and enlist discussion; it broke out like

a rash over the face of current literature, and for a while was epidemic; it was simply a symptom, merely one feature of a perfectly consistent and strictly logical progress from the principle involved in this new idea of the divine immanence, and the end is not yet. The progressives tell us:

> "We are gaining along the heights of faith broader views of redemption in which we may hope to comprehend and harmonize the new scientific truths of the correlation of all things, and the laws of the development of the universe."

God's grace is only one department of natural law, one phase merely of the universal process; and the whole race, as a race, under the influence of this great natural law, sweeps on as a part of a grand cosmic development through æons of ages towards some far-off, divine event, undefined as yet by this theology, but having, in my judgment, apparently but one logical issue, viz., annihilation for countless myriads of the human race, with some sort of a beatification for the comparatively few favored ones whose happy lot it shall be finally to form the ultimate crown of the infinite series in the measureless future! This seems the only logical result; but the logical and theological are not always absolutely identical, and "along the heights" of the latter I sometimes seem to catch fugitive glimpses of views which squint towards a species of restorationism or universalism, as a result of the all-embracing love of the immanent God.

Here ends our survey of the field as a whole; and our deliberate verdict upon the scheme in its entirety, its inherent nature, and its logical results, must be that nothing but the pale ghost of a spiritualized pantheism stands between it and the doom of a blank atheism. This conviction begets hope within us; our age has no

place for atheism, nor do we think pantheism in any form can long be popular.

Following this general summary, I single out for more particular emphasis in detail the developments of this theology in several capital directions:

I. *The Doctrine of the Divine Fatherhood.*

They charge the conservative theology with obscuring the fatherhood of God, and they claim the honor of rescuing this doctrine from such obscuration and of bringing it afresh and prominently before the world. They institute a comparison between the earlier Greek theology and the Latin, alleging the latter to be harsher, sterner, more scholastic, less spiritual, and they assert that under its domination the fatherhood has been buried in the sovereignty.

I judge that there may be possibly some plausibility at least in this charge; it is altogether likely that Latin theology lays more stress on the sovereignty than on the fatherhood. It is the distinguishing characteristic, and we have been accustomed hitherto to consider it equally the distinguishing glory, of Calvinistic theology that beyond any other and beyond all other it emphasized the sovereignty of God. This more than anything else has given to Calvinism its strength and strenuousness, its sturdiness and persistence, its reverence for God, and its regard for man made in God's image; it is this that makes it fear God so supremely that it fears naught beside him, it is this that teaches a submission to God so humble and so utter as to leave no room for submission to aught beneath him.

That God is the Father it has always taught, taught clearly, taught constantly, taught consistently, but it has taught that he is sovereign first, then father; a sovereign who is also a father, rather than a father who

is also a sovereign. There is much in this order, so much that it colors the whole of theology; this, moreover, is the Scripture order.

The difference between the old theology and the new is not that the latter teaches the fatherhood more clearly, but that it broadens it more widely; not that it emphasizes it more strongly, but that it extends it more unlimitedly. When, therefore, the representatives of the current theology charge that conservative orthodoxy "obscures" the fatherhood, let it be understood distinctly that what they really mean is that it *limits* the fatherhood; and this is what "an increasing frankness" and "a deepening sincerity" ought to say. Let me add here that in such limitation it simply follows the explicit and uniform teaching of the Holy Scriptures.

According to the new theology the fatherhood is broadened until it embraces the whole human race, as a race; all mankind are the children of God. There is a general, vague sense in which this is true, but not at all in the sense in which the new theology teaches. One of their most eminent representatives declares:

> "Man as man is God's child, and the sin of the man consists in perpetually living as if it were false. It is the sin of the heathen, and what is your mission but to tell him that he is God's child and not living up to his privilege?"

Concerning this so-called development, I have space for only two remarks:

1. In this boasted extension of the relation, all that ever made it precious has been developed out of it. If, to borrow the language of the advocates of this view, the heathen bowing down to stocks and stones is as really the child of God as he whom the new theology calls "the conscious child" of God, then *quoad* the fatherhood the whole difference is purely subjective; so far as

the objective fact is concerned, the most degraded and debased heathen and the humblest, devoutest saint stand in the sight of God on the same level, save in the matter of illumination; this is what their extension of the doctrine means, *if it means anything different from what conservative theology has been teaching from time immemorial.* But if it does mean this, then their extension of the doctrine has entirely done away with the fatherhood in any true and proper sense by reducing in practically to the creatorship.

2. My second remark is that the whole teaching of Scripture is definitely and decisively against this palpable absurdity.

The word of God nowhere proclaims this a privilege common to man as man, but one bestowed on man as a believer and upon the inexorable condition of his faith; no man enters into it by his natural birth, but by a spiritual birth, a being born again; he is not created a child in Adam, but recreated a child in Christ Jesus.

Consider, *e. g.*, the Scriptures relied upon by our progressive brethren as sustaining their view. Gal. iii. 26–29:

"26. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.

"27. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

"28. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

"29. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise."

Even the most cursory exegesis of that passage demonstrates infallibly:

(1), That the "all" addressed are professed believers in Christ; to such are the words spoken, not to man as man, nor even to Jew as Jew.

(2), They are said distinctly to be the children of God "by faith in Christ Jesus"; not by virtue of birth into a sanctified race, nor by virtue of the historic fact of an incarnation or generic result of it, nor yet by virtue of the fact of the fatherhood of God, but by their faith in Christ Jesus.

(3), It is a class who have "put on Christ" by a baptism into him; uniformly in the Scriptures a spiritual baptism.

(4), And by virtue of such *personal* union with Christ this faith, baptism, enduement, nullifies all distinctions of race, sex, and caste; such as have experienced it become thereby and therefrom "one in Christ Jesus," what they never were, and never could have been by nature.

(5), This oneness is solely from Christ and solely *in* him; he is at once the source and the sphere of its operation.

(6), As such they are "Abraham's seed," not Adam's; *i. e.*, an *elect seed;* and they are "heirs according to the promise," a promise made not to mankind, but to one elect family of mankind.

(7), Those who are "Christ's" are heirs, and only those.

The language could not have been more explicit, emphatic, and effective if it had been constructed expressly to refute the very error it is cited to sustain.

John i. 11, 12, is another passage referred to as supporting the view:

"11. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

"12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

We are told in comment:

"They were his own, but they wanted power to become his own. Draw a distinction, then, between being the child of God and realizing it."

Now, in what sense they were "his own" when he came to them? Does it mean that they were the sons of God? Were they the sons of God when they rejected him? (See Jno. viii. 38–44.) Was there no difference between Annas and Caiaphas on the one hand, and Peter and John on the other, save that the latter had power to realize that they were sons, whereas the former, *though as really sons*, had not power to realize the fact? Such would seem to be the content of the comment; but note:

"He came unto his own (race), but his own (race) received him not (as the Christ or Messiah), but as many as received him, to *them* gave he power (ἐξουσία not δύναμις) to become the sons of God;" not to realize that they were sons, but to become such; and this ἐξουσία "right, authority, privilege," is expressly here, as elsewhere, limited to those that believe in his name, exactly the same truth taught in the previous passage; by faith they *become* sons of God, what they were not, and could not have been, before they believed. Once more; James i. 18, is quoted, "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth," and then it is added, "But remember, it is a truth; true whether you believe it or not; true whether you are baptized or not."

The obvious assumption underlying this comment being, that by "truth" in the Scripture text James means the truth of the divine fatherhood, as referred to in the comment, though this is so palpable a perversion as hardly to consist with common honesty in a commentator. "The word of truth," in the text, most evidently means the word of God, regularly referred to as the instrumental agency of the new birth. James does not teach in that text that men are brought by the truth of the divine fatherhood to realize that they are sons, but that sons are *begotten* by the gospel. This text would seem, from

the very plainness of the figure used, to be beyond the possibility of misconstruction; it ought not to be necessary to emphasize, to any considerable extent, that one could not be a child before he was begotten.

The new theology is very happy in some things, but exegesis is not its forte.

II. *One of the most Significant Departures of the New Theology is Seen in the Emphasis it Places on the Incarnation.*

As between the incarnation and the atonement, conservative theology has always laid chief stress on the latter, regarding the incarnation, in its relation to the atonement, as a means to an end; God the Son becoming the incarnate Christ in order that he might render the atonement. "Forasmuch, then, as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; *that through death* he might destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil."

The new theology reverses the emphasis of the old, and lays its chief stress on the incarnation; its writers have very little to say of the atonement, and that little so exceedingly vague that it is utterly impossible to discover, with any satisfying exactness, just what their conception of the atonement is; so far as their allusions go, they indicate, in my judgment, a Socinian conception. They write much as though they believed the incarnation to be the natural, logical, inevitable crown of a revealing process; that it would have occurred even had there been no sin to atone for. As one says: "That the incarnation of the Son of God was also intimately connected with the laws of God as they are revealed in outward nature, that his manifestation in the flesh was part of an immutable, eternal purpose."

One of the very latest exponents of this school prophe-

sies that in the improved theology of the future "the incarnation will not be an expedient, but a consummation." This phrase is exceedingly significant, not an expedient, but a consummation! not a means to fulfil some divine purpose, of which it was the necessary antecedent condition, but the final flower of a past process long unfolding through the ages. Mark it, it is not the atonement that is the consummation, but the incarnation. And of what is the incarnation a consummation? Why, evidently, of revelation; Christ is viewed thus not as the redeemer of man, but the revealer of God; here is the force of the epigrammatic contrast between expedient and consummation; he is the prophet, not the priest. Here you have the genesis and the genius of the whole soteriology of the school, its informing spirit. This rightly apprehended and properly appreciated also explains its remarkable affinity with certain hoary old heresies anent the person of Christ. This is why Unitarianism, *e. g.*, has been so ready to applaud the movement, and so prompt to claim its representatives.

The new theology lays its emphasis on the birth, not on the death; the manger is its focal point, not the cross—the dreamy, poetic sentimentalism of the three orient visitors at the cradle, rather than the awestruck group around the cross that watched the divine tragedy enacting between a darkening heaven and a shuddering earth.

To a reflecting mind, that this is a clear reversal of the Scripture emphasis is evident:

1. The word of God teaches that Christ came to die. This is one distinctive feature that, amid much that is common to humanity, differentiates his birth from that of all the rest of the sons of men, viz.: that whereas in the case of every other human being death is but the

fatal catastrophe that puts summary arrest on all the plans and purposes of earthly life, in his case it was the fulfilment of all its plans and purposes, the crown and the consummation of the whole, the accomplishment unto which and until which he was straitened. When he cried out, "It is finished," he meant not that his life was ended, but that its purpose was accomplished, its mission fulfilled. He came literally to die, his life was in order to his death.

2. Beginning with the Acts, we find the apostles plainly ignorant of this great development. The incarnation yields to the atonement, and the death of Christ, in its purpose and effect, becomes the great burden of apostolic preaching. Little is said of the life as compared with the place given to the death; this is too patent to need enlarging upon; indeed, a recent writer of the new school marks this, and himself calls attention to it, and construes it as a mark of inferiority, indicating rather a doctrinal departure than a doctrinal development, and he depreciates the apostolic preaching on that account. His criticism serves at least to make one thing clear; either the apostles have "departed," or the new theology has; as between the two, I am frank to say that I prefer to "depart" and be with the apostles.

3. So dominant was Christ's death in apostolic doctrine, that the very words, "cross of Christ," became virtually synonymous with the word gospel. This was what Paul preached; it was this that Paul gloried in; he determined not to know anything save Christ crucified.

Had the new theology's conception prevailed then, such phraseology could never in the world have become current. This apostolic emphasis of the death of Christ, so decided, so uniform, is absolutely fatal to this new view of the incarnation; aye, more, it is a complete reversal of it.

III. *Of all the Alleged Improvements Proffered by the Current Theology, the Most Pleasing and Plausible is that which Pleads for a Christocentric Theology.*

Its rallying cry is "Back to Christ!" which certainly has much to commend it to the devout. Were the phrase slightly changed, and "Close to Christ," or even "Closer to Christ" substituted, I should have less fault to find; but the words back to Christ imply that conservative theology has departed from Christ, illustrating a feature common to all their claims, viz., that every claim is, on its obverse, a charge. As I deny the charge I challenge the phrase. The true character of this rallying cry and its far-reaching significance become evident when we discover that in the usage of its advocates it applies not to the theology of the seventeenth century only, as they call it, but also to that of the first century. It is urged not against John Calvin alone, but also against John Calvin's great forerunner in Calvinism, the Apostle Paul, and we are urged to go back from Paul to Christ; this fact should give us pause, lest we find ourselves invited to go not back *to* Christ, but to go back *of* Christ, whither I believe not a few of the new theologists have already gone.

The allegation is made that the orthodox theology puts an exaggerated emphasis, lays undue stress on sin; hence the new theology calls the Calvinistic system a sincentric, rather than a Christocentric theology. They urge that sin is at most but an incident or an accident in the nature and history of man, that it is not at all of the essence of man, so to speak, and, therefore, to make all theology turn on the doctrine of sin is to convert a mere accident into the very essence of truth, determinative of the whole system.

This objection has a very plausible sound, and the assumption of philosophic terms gives it the appearance

of force, just as the semi-scientific jargon it is fond of using gives it weight often with the popular mind; but that it is only plausible we think is easily demonstrable to any thoughtful hearer.

1. Admit, if you please, the charge that the conservative theology is sincentric, it is only so because the Bible is, and it is not more so than the Bible. The word of God might be entitled, Man's Ruin and God's Remedy. It reveals in the very beginning man's initial sin, and from that point, from Genesis to Revelation, it is a history of the conflict advertised in the protevangelium between the seed of the woman and the serpent; this I conceive to be its prime purpose, all else is but incidental and ancillary to this the main object of the book: to trace the development of God's redeeming purpose through all ages and dispensations until the volume ends, as it began, in a paradise, descending from God out of heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. In the very beginning man became a sinner; from that moment all his relations to God were those of a sinner, all his approaches to God were the approaches of a sinner, all of God's revelations to him were revelations to a sinner, all of God's dealings with him were dealings with a sinner. Any theology that did not take this into account would be false to fact, and hence unfaithful to truth. If this constitutes a theology sincentric, then sincentric it must be. If man be such a sinner as the word of God declares him to be, then nothing short of this theology can suit him, because nothing short of it can save him. What sort of theology man would have had had he never sinned, we do not know, and we are not greatly concerned to inquire; it is a condition that confronts us, not a theory; conservative theology meets that condition and meets it exactly as the Bible does.

2. The contrast between the essential and the accidental is mere jugglery with philosophic terms. The implication is that traditional theology converts the accidental into the essential, an implication manifestly absurd upon its very face. That this is so, is proven by the fact that orthodox theology teaches that in the beginning man was without sin, and that in the end he shall be again free from it, that the perfect man is a sinless man. This is the very *raison d' être* of its so-called sincentric theology.

When our enterprising brethren lay such stress on the "incidental" character of sin we could retort by reminding them that the incidental may be exceedingly influential; *e. g.*, a prosperous, active, independent mechanic falls from a scaffold and is picked up insensible; he recovers, to be a cripple for life; he must lie prone upon his back and be tended like an infant, his whole locomotor system is paralyzed; he may live fifty years afterward, sound and well in every other respect, nevertheless his whole after-life will be determined and controlled by that incident, and it is of little weight to say that such a condition is not of the "essence" of the man, and ought, therefore, not to be determinative of his future; it is such, nevertheless. Just so the Bible tells us that in the youth of the world mankind suffered a fall, and that by it his moral backbone was broken, that he has been ever since a confirmed cripple—aye, even worse, by far, it teaches that this "mere incident" spiritually *slew* him!

3. Any attempted contrast between a Christocentric theology and a sincentric seems to me singularly out of place. The truth is, that a theology will be really Christocentric just in proportion as it is sincentric; no system can properly exalt Christ that underestimates

sin. No system has ever honored the Saviour as Calvinism has, and this plausible pretense of the new theology sounds like the mock homage of the reed sceptre and the crown of thorns. Calvinistic theology, however, strictly speaking, is neither sincentric nor yet Christocentric; it is theocentric; for while recognizing the absolute sovereignty and mediatorial supremacy of our adorable Lord, it looks forward to the ultimate time "when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father. . . . And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."

IV. *The Current Popular Theology gives a large place to what it calls the Christian Consciousness.*

Schleiermacher maintained that religion resides in the sensibility, not in the intelligence, nor in the will, nor in the active powers of man; that it is a form of feeling, which he specified more particularly as a sense of absolute dependence. This was the fundamental position of his theology, or philosophy, rather; for his system is more properly the latter than the former. This sense of dependence he declared to be the essential principle of all religion in every form, from the lowest up to the highest. How this sense of dependence will express itself will depend mainly upon the degree of culture in the individual or the community; the more enlightened and pure a person is, the more will he be able to appreciate what is involved in this sense of dependence upon God. All men have naturally this sense of dependence, or God-consciousness, as it is sometimes called, lying dormant, to be awakened, developed, cultured and illuminated by various agencies and influences. When this religious consciousness, or God-consciousness, has been awakened,

developed, cultivated to a certain stage, it becomes then the Christian consciousness.

One of his admirers among the representatives of the current theology says:

"Schleiermacher spoke not only of a religious consciousness in man whose primary characteristic was the feeling of dependence upon God, but also of what he called the Christian consciousness, the product of specifically Christian influences during the ages of the church. The fact of a Christ, his teaching, and the events of his life had entered into history, becoming inwrought, as it were, into the consciousness, as if an essential part of its furniture. For this reason the history of the church became the continuation of a revealing process, in which the action of God, as the indwelling Spirit, perpetuated and developed the work of Christ."

And the admiring follower speaks of this view as "redeeming the study of history."

The results of such views cannot be better expressed than in the terse but comprehensive words of Dr. Hodge:

"Christianity subjectively considered is the intuitions of good men, as occasioned and determined by the appearance of Christ. Objectively considered, or in other words, Christian theology, is the logical analysis and scientific arrangement and elucidation of the truths involved in those intuitions."

According to this basal principle of Schleiermacher, Christianity is a strictly natural development, just as really so as is agriculture; the latest forms of Christian faith bearing very much the same relation to the fetichism of the heathen that the agricultural implements of this century bear to the crude devices of primitive ages. As has already been said, Christianity was as closely connected with heathenism as with Judaism; so far as inherent character is concerned "there was no more affinity with it in Judaism than in the higher forms of heathen thought."

Such views of the nature and the origin of Christianity necessarily take from inspiration all its distinctive character and rob it of all that is extraordinary by reducing it to mere illumination, the same in kind as that shared by all believers; a mere intuition or understanding of truth determined in degree by religious experience, depending for its efficiency and its value largely upon the character, the circumstances, the opportunities, the advantages, of the particular individual in each case.

The Scriptures have, and can have, no real authority as a rule of faith; their chief value, indeed their only practical value, is to stimulate men to strive after the experience of the religious life of its writers, and thus to attain, each for himself, a like intuition of divine things.

Any one familiar with the writings of the current popular theology will at once recognize the exceeding close kinship, the remarkable similarity, between the Christian consciousness, which plays so prominent a part in its system, and the views of Schleiermacher. Its advocates use the term somewhat vaguely; sometimes as if it were very nearly synonymous with human reason, generally as though it were equivalent to the common consent of the religious sensibility of universal christendom, a combination of reason and feeling, the human heart and the human intellect under the illuminating and developing influences of God's grace and providence; and this alleged common consent, as an intuition, is invested with the *semper, ubique, ab omnibus* attributes which constitute it in the judgment of its advocates a court of final and supreme resort.

For example, we read:

"We can go further and claim, not only that the Christian consciousness is the organ of increasing knowledge, but also that all statements and interpretations of truth, to be accepted, must

commend themselves to the Christian consciounsess. . . . Its function, then, may be considered both the development and the testing of progressive theology.

"The Christian consciousness of to-day, which is itself a product of the gospel, cannot be contradicted by the gospel. Hence any theories which claim to be confirmed by the Bible, yet against which Christian sentiment protests, should not be accepted.[1]

"The mind accepts revelation because it accepts the *substance* of revelation. . . . The reason believes the revelation because *in itself* it is reasonable. . . . It is as legitimate for the reason to pass judgment upon the *contents* of revelation, as upon the grounds of receiving it. . . . It enters into the material of revelation and plants its feet there."

The author's own emphasis of certain words in the preceding paragraph relieves the necessity of comment on the part of the present speaker; nor need I pause here to show that, to all intents and purposes, this view of the character and office of the Christian consciousness puts the current theology practically and squarely on the platform of Schleiermacher.

It is evident that the Bible is divested of all authority; it is accepted only so far as it commends itself to the individual Christian consciousness of the reader; anything that he considers unreasonable, he refuses; anything not in accord with his sentiment, he rejects; the obvious, the inevitable result, is, that every man becomes virtually the maker of his own Bible!

I shall dismiss this doctrine of the Christian consciousness with two remarks:

---

[1] But how would this application of the very same logic do?

"The Christian consciousness of to-day, which is itself a product of the gospel, cannot be contradicted by the gospel." *Hence any sentiment which claims to be the Christian consciousness, yet contradicts the Bible, is thereby proven spurious and should not be accepted.*

1. I deny its very existence. It is a mere figment of the imagination. It is constantly referred to, and deferred to, as if it were a universal and unanimous consensus of the Christian mind and heart, an infallible authority, an ultimate appeal; whereas this vaunted Christian consciousness is at best nothing more than the clamorous claim of a comparatively small coterie of self-confident men, who remind one of a hopeless minority in a deliberative body, that strives to make up in noise what it lacks in numbers; the fussy few who are the ecclesiastical Ishmaelites of their respective denominations. Can any man doubt that these self-styled "progressives" are an insignificant minority when compared with the great body of conservative believers? Can there be any question of the fact that the common consent of Christian feeling, if there be such a thing, is against their views?

If I be answered that the consciousness referred to is not that of the great body of ignorant believers, but rather the verdict of the learned, those qualified to understand such matters, my reply would be, first: That this vacates virtually the position entirely, such an answer is a surrender. But, second: not even can this surrender avail, for there is among this limited class no such unanimity of assent as is assumed. We have the Christian consciousness in Andover and Union (New York) Seminaries asserting one thing, while the Christian consciousness in Princeton, McCormick, Union, (Virginia), Columbia, Louisville, Clarksville, etc., asserts exactly the contrary.

You find this *semper*, *ubique*, *ab omnibus* intuition most confidently asserting certain things through the lips of our very progressive brother Lyman Abott in Brooklyn, and immediately the Congregational Council, of which he is a member, holds a meeting and gravely informs

the world that brother Abbott's Christian consciousness is not their Christian consciousness. Now, then, it becomes a very practical and a very puzzling question, *whose Christian consciousness is authority?* And in this question lies the refutation of the whole absurdity, which brings me to my second remark:

2. The doctrine is not a figment only, it is a folly.

The criticism must be arrested here, not for lack of material but for want of time.

In my opening sentence I stated that when the present stage of our discussion should have been reached, the relation between the current theology and the Westminster symbols would be self-evident, and that the part the latter must play in the needs of the future would be implicit in the comparison. If only the smallest measure of success has attended my effort at a review of the current theology, this relation is now seen to be clearly that of contrast decided and complete, embracing sources, methods and results; there is scarcely a material point of agreement between the two; if one is right, the other is radically and comprehensively wrong. Let the new use the dialect of the old as it will, its meaning and intent, its spirit and motive, must soon become evident; the trade-marks of the old cannot much longer accredit it in the esteem of any save of such as are so blind that they will not see. We trust that their revision and restatement will keep pace with their progress and will honestly reflect that progress. We crave a speedy formulation of their faith, one that shall fairly and fully register their advance; let them leave their vagueness and give us something definite; abandon the negative, the destructive, and assume the positive, undertake the constructive; let them put forth their revised symbols. We

heartily commend for their consideration the following as the first question and answer in their improved catechism:

"*What is the chief end of God?*

God's chief end is to glorify man and to develop him forever."

If such be the relation between the two systems, the only position consistently open to the Westminster theology is that of unyielding opposition; there is no possibility of harmony, there ought to be no place for compromise; as long as it is faithful to the duty of contending earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, so long must it resist the advance of this modern type of theology. Like its greatest representative, it is "set for the defence of the gospel." Its coherence of thought; its compactness of logical structure; its definiteness and clearness of statement; its unswerving loyalty to God's word; its constant resort to that word as its ultimate appeal, its final and infallible authority; its exaltation of God as sovereign; its humbling influence on the pride and prejudice of man; its emphasis of the doctrines of divine grace—all fit it to serve both as a test of truth and as a bulwark against error, at once the safe guide and the safeguard of pure, scriptural doctrine.

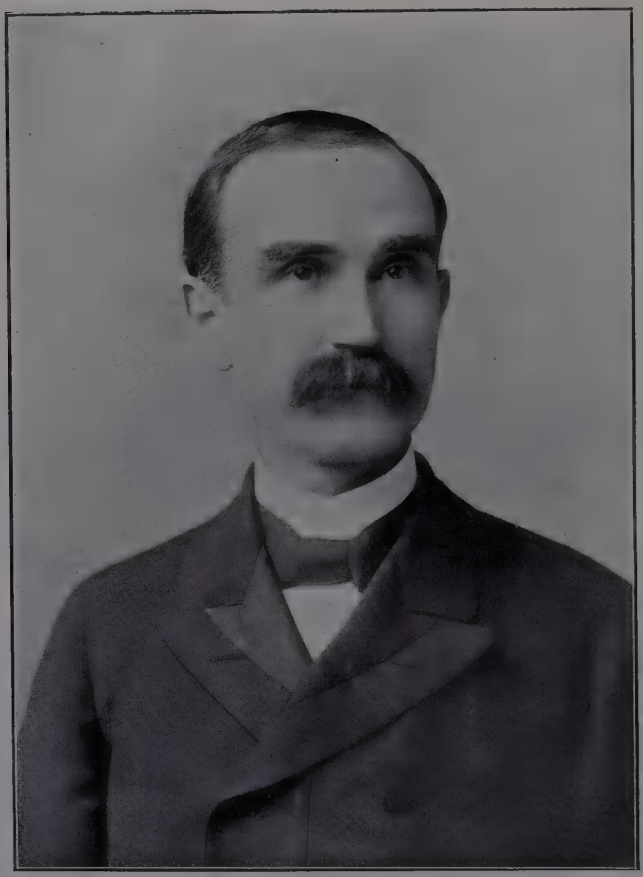
It is easy to see that when the authority of the Scriptures is discredited and every man taught to mould his theology solely according to his tastes, his sentiments, his prejudices, there can be no assurance for the future; there remains no standard but individual preference, and not only theology, but even morals are at the mercy of mere whim; every man becomes a law unto himself, and this in religion and morals, as everywhere else, is anarchy, and anarchy is chaos.

The Westminster theology stands prepared to present

a solid front against such error; no other system has the inherent force to resist this rising tide as the Westminster has; it stands, therefore, to-day invested with an importance perhaps transcending all present possible appreciation, for should this new theology win the day there is danger that the world may be ultimately orphaned of its God as it is fast being robbed of its Bible.

The part, then, that Calvinistic theology must play in the needs of the future is that of a granite ledge against the insidious encroachments of a troubled sea casting up mire and dirt; its office is to say, with the voice of that God, whose humble mouth-piece it has been privileged to prove in many a stormy period of the past,

"HITHERTO SHALT THOU COME, BUT NO FURTHER: AND HERE SHALL THY PROUD WAVES BE STAYED."



REV. JOHN F. CANNON, D. D.

X.

THE INFLUENCE EXERTED BY THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS UPON THE INDIVIDUAL, THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY.

BY

REV. JOHN F. CANNON, D. D.,

PASTOR OF THE GRAND AVENUE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ST. LOUIS, MO.

ANALYSIS.

References to Froude and Bacon.—The tree is known by its fruits.—The Westminster Standards are fully vindicated by the test which time and experience supply.—Two modes of treating the subject combined.—One is the argument from the doctrines of the Standards and the constitution of man's nature.—The other is reasoning from the actual verdict of history.—Both lines concurrent and conclusive.—The Catechisms meet the youthful mind at a time of life when deep impressions are made.—Baxter quoted.—The first question of the Catechism strikes a high key.—This high key is kept up all through.—The divine sovereignty exalted.—The fearful nature of sin emphasized.—Salvation by grace made clear.—The security of the believer established.—His glorious hope unfolded.—These doctrines tend to produce a strong and elevated type of piety.—The Standards also give a large place to distinctively ethical teaching.—Half the Catechisms, almost, is ethical teaching.—The whole sphere of man's duty is here covered.—The foundation of duty is made to rest upon the authority of God in his word.—Beecher quoted.—History cited to confirm this.—Many examples given.—Huguenots.—Dutch Protestants.—Puritans.—Covenanters.—Scotch-Irish.—Even rejectors of the doctrines of the Standards praise their ethics.—Their very strictness one of their excellencies.—Conviction rather than sentiment controls.—The effect on the individual is good.—Cases quoted.—Courage produced by this teaching.—Contrast with Arminian doctrine.—Ireland used to illustrate.—The Standards deal largely, also, with domestic and social life.—The family made sacred.—The covenant relation of parents made plain.—On this basis the children are to be trained for the Lord.—The value of this for the family shown.—"The Cottar's Saturday Night," to illustrate.—Good citizens are thus produced.—The individual made right and the family held sacred have this result.—The Standards also honor the Sabbath.—The sacred day protected.—This is of great value to society in a variety of ways.—The family and the Sabbath are the two Edenic institutions which the Standards exalt and protect.—A solemn warning uttered.—An earnest exhortation given.

X.

THE INFLUENCE EXERTED BY THE WESTMINSTER SYMBOLS UPON THE INDIVIDUAL, THE FAMILY, AND SOCIETY.

IN his celebrated essay on "Calvinism," Mr. Froude says: "The practical effect of a belief is the real test of its soundness." It is true of creeds, as of men, that they are to be known by their fruits. Men do not gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. "Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit."

There is a most real and vital connection between belief and conduct, between creed and character. What men believe, that they become. As Bacon says: "Truth and goodness differ but as the seal and the print; for truth prints goodness." The same may be said of error and evil. Evil in conduct and character is ever the imprint of error.

Two hundred and fifty years afford a sufficient probation for fairly testing a system of religious doctrine, especially when that system has been tried among different peoples and under different social and political conditions. To-day we are to inquire how the Standards, framed by the Westminster Assembly, abide this test. How have they stood translation into real life or incarnation in living men and women? Have their practical effects been such as to vindicate their right to survive among the creeds of Christendom? What influence have

they exerted upon "the individual, the family, and society," where they have been embraced? The question may be answered in two ways:

First, we may reason *a priori* from the nature of the doctrines set forth in our Standards, and from what we know of human nature as to the moral effects which they must produce.

Or we may appeal to history to ascertain what are the effects which they actually have produced. We shall try to combine these methods; although it will be readily perceived that the subject is too extensive to receive anything like exhaustive treatment within the limits of a single discourse.

1. In the first place, in order to estimate the influence which these symbols of faith exert over the individual who comes in contact with them, the fact must be taken into account that they meet him very early in his career.

The Westminster divines well understood the necessity of training up a child in the way he should go in order to insure against his departing from it in age. They heard and heeded the risen Master's commission to Simon Peter, "Feed my *lambs*." Their very best work, in the judgment of many, is found in the provision which they made for the lambs of the flock.

Richard Baxter is quoted as saying: "If the Westminster Assembly had done nothing more than produced the Shorter Catechism they would be entitled to the everlasting gratitude of the Christian church." He further expressed the opinion that, next to the Bible, it was probably the best book in the world. Its many excellencies, and its admirable adaptation to the purpose for which it was framed, have been well set forth in a preceding address, so that it is needless for me to enlarge upon it.

That Catechism meets the youth first of all with the significant question, "What is the chief end of man?" and the pregnant answer, "Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever." It has been said that the first question in each of the most widely used Catechisms of Christendom is a key to its character and contents. Of the Westminster Shorter this is unquestionably true. Its opening question strikes the keynote of the whole system of doctrine which it unfolds. God is exalted. His sovereign supremacy is asserted; he is all and in all; his glory is the only proper end both for himself and all his creatures; he is not for the sake of the creature; the creature is for his sake. As one has said, "In all place, in all time, from eternity to eternity, Calvinism sees God."

Along with this supreme exaltation of God, the Westminster Standards inculcate the teaching of Scripture as to the enormity of sin, and the hopelessness and misery of man's fallen estate. On this crucial question they go to the root where truth and error divide. There is nothing superficial or compromising in their treatment of it. They make no concession to the pride of the human heart. In proportion as God is glorious and great, the sin of man is heinous and fatal. It is recreancy to his supreme relation; it separates him from his God, and hence leaves him "dead in trespasses and sins." The sinner is lost. Left to himself his condition is one of hopeless condemnation and woe.

Then a salvation is revealed which is *all* of grace; a salvation which from beginning to end is "of the Lord." No flesh is allowed to glory in his presence. No inch of room is left for human boasting. But it is a salvation which is *complete*. It embraces the believing sinner in the arms of unchanging love. It secures him by the

bonds of an everlasting covenant. It gives him an inalienable place in the family of God. It sets before him a hope which is unclouded by a single doubt. Now the objection which men have urged against this scheme of doctrine from the beginning until now is that it is unfavorable to holiness and morality; that it takes away all motives to godly and righteous living, and opens the way to licentiousness.

The Scriptures distinctly refute the objection, and so do all history and experience. *Grace* is the spring of holiness, and its only spring, "The grace of God which bringeth salvation . . . teaches us," and it only teaches the lesson effectively, "that denying ungodliness and worldly lust we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present world."

Love is the fulfilling of the law, and love is evoked by grace. The only hope of our emancipation from sin, according to the Apostle Paul, arises from the fact that we are "not under the law but under grace." The sinner is in no condition to render acceptable obedience or devoted service until all confidence in the flesh has been completely shattered, and he has been freed from every vestige of legal bondage, and brought into the liberty of grace. He is only brought into this condition when he has been humbled and then exalted, smitten, and then healed by the doctrines of grace which are formulated in the Westminster Standards. Hence, wherever these doctrines have been received they have brought forth the fruits of righteousness. What Dr. Chalmers said of Scotland is true the world over: "Wherever there has been most Calvinism, men have been most moral."

Another feature of our Standards which deserves to be noticed in this connection, as a feature which makes for righteousness, is the prominence which they give to

ethical teaching. They are an exposition not only of doctrine but of duty. They do not treat only, as some ignorantly suppose, of dogmas of faith. They set forth not only "what man is to believe concerning God," but also "what duties God requires of man." Following the order of Holy Scriptures, having laid a foundation of doctrine, they proceed to rear upon it a superstructure of duty.

More than half of each of the Catechisms is devoted to ethical subjects. The perpetual obligation of the moral law is recognized. It is expounded precept by precept, in the light of the Sermon on the Mount, and with a simplicity, and precision, and spiritual insight which have never been surpassed.

It is shown that the life redeemed and directed by grace is not a lawless life, but is bounded and regulated by the statutes of the Lord.

The whole sphere of human conduct is covered. Duty is grounded on its only sure foundation—divine authority. The conscience is commanded by the only voice to which it owes obedience, the voice of God. The heart is plied by the only motives to holiness that have ever completely swayed it, motives drawn from the cross of Christ. Surely, such teaching, when accompanied by the Spirit's grace, must conduce to righteousness of life. Mr. Beecher never spoke more truly than when he said of Calvinism: "There never was a system since the world stood which put upon man such motives to holiness, or which builds batteries which sweep the whole ground of sin with such terrible artillery."

As a matter of fact, wherever this system of truth has been embraced it has produced a noble and distinct type of character—a type so clearly marked that secular his-

torians, with no religious bias, have recognized it, and pointed to it as a "remarkable illustration of the power of religious training in the formation of character." We see it among the Huguenots of France, the Protestant Dutch of Holland, the Puritans of England, the Covenanters of Scotland, the Scotch-Irish of Ulster, and also among the descendants of them all in our own country. Widely as these people differ as to race and language and national habits, there is a strong family likeness between them, a likeness which can only be accounted for by the fact that they were trained in a common religious faith. And the type of character developed among them was as pure and noble as it was distinct. It is safe to say it has never been surpassed in the history of the world. That they had their faults goes without saying. But even their "failings," as Burns said of his father's, were such as "leaned to virtue's side."

The accusations which their opponents have made against them have, in most instances, been encomiums. They have been criticised for being too strict and uncompromising in their views of life and duty. But all excellence is marked by strictness. Strictness certainly characterizes everything which truly represents God. The laws of nature are all strict; the laws of hygiene are strict; and the life which would secure their benediction must be a strict life. So with the laws of morals. Like him who ordained them they know "no variableness nor shadow of turning." Any pretended exposition of the moral nature and claims of God which is characterized by looseness, by that very fact brands itself as false. Their narrowness has been unctuously deplored. But after all is it not the narrowness of truth?

The Master himself said, "Strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there

be that find it." "Narrowness," it has been said, "is often the badge of usefulness." Great leaders of men have been narrow. Elijah was too narrow to adopt the worship of Baal. Martin Luther was too narrow to include in his creed the errors of the Papacy. Wesley was too narrow to sympathize with the cold ritualism of his age. William Carey was so narrow that he had no sympathy with the anti-mission spirit of his age. Gideon was so narrow that he could not tolerate the idols in his father's house, but rose in his might and tore them down." The narrowness of Calvinists has usually been of the same sort. One thing cannot be questioned—the adherents of this faith have always been marked by *intelligence*. It is a plain fact of history that Calvinism and ignorance have never dwelt together in unity. Wherever they have met, one or the other has had to quit the field. They have been men who were possessed and controlled by convictions rather than sentiments. They have believed something, and have been ready to stand for their belief against all odds. They have been men in whom conscience was developed, who were inspired by a high regard for right and duty. Stanley, the African explorer, giving his impressions of Livingstone and Mackay, whose missionary work he had observed in the heart of Africa, expressed the opinion that Scotchmen make the best missionaries in the world; and that what gives them their preëminent qualifications for this arduous work is their supreme devotion to duty. That devotion is the legitimate fruit of their religious training.

Courage is another trait which to a marked degree has characterized such as are moulded by this creed. It is not true that "conscience makes cowards of us all." This is true only of a bad conscience. A good conscience

makes a man a hero. He who walks in the fear of God is emancipated from lower fears. He who believes in an Almighty Father, who has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and who through his overruling providence is preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions, is made superior to those experiences of life which cause others to quake and fear. Hence, Bancroft says, "A coward and a Puritan never went together."

And with them, as always, the fear of God has been accompanied by a regard for man. Honesty, integrity, and all social and domestic virtues have been developed among them to a degree that is rarely seen in this selfish and grasping world. "Men may talk as much as they please, says Mr. Beecher, "against the Calvinists, Puritans, and Presbyterians, but you will find that when they want to make an investment they have no objection to Calvinism, or Puritanism, or Presbyterianism. They know that where these systems prevail their capital may be safely invested."

In the providence of God a most significant object lesson has been given to the world as to the practical effect of our Presbyterian faith, on character in contrast with the effect of an antipodal faith, the full-blown Arminianism the papacy.

Forty years ago a German traveller in Ireland wrote that in passing from Leinster into Ulster he seemed to have entered another world, so great was the contrast. That contrast still exists. In the latter, one meets everywhere an intelligent, industrious, moral, and law-abiding people. In the former, he is confronted on every hand with ignorance, and poverty, and lawlessness, and crime. Thirty thousand soldiers are quartered in Ireland, only three thousand of them in Ulster. Four times as many policemen, in proportion to the population, are re-

quired in the south of Ireland as in the north. There is but one explanation of the difference: the Ulster men have been moulded by the teachings of the Westminster Assembly; their southern neighbors have been moulded by the decrees of the Vatican, and the Council of Trent. We claim, then, for our venerable creed, that whatever the world may say of it, it is fitted to be, and, according to the testimony of impartial history, has proved itself to be a *character-making* creed.

2. But the Westminster Standards do not concern themselves alone with the individual; they take into account also his domestic and social relations. Green, the English historian, says: "Home, as we conceive it, was the creation of the Puritan." Certain it is that the ideal Christian home has been most nearly realized in those places where the influence of the Westminster Symbols has been most dominant. Nor is it strange. For, first, they jealously guard the inviolable sanctity of the marriage bond. In an age of intolerable looseness they expounded fearlessly and without compromise the teaching of Holy Scripture as to marriage and divorces, and the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. It is stated as a historical fact, that "in all the history of the Puritans there is not an example of a divorce." Thus they cleared from its abuses, and set forth in its original sanctity, that fundamental relation of the family.

Again, they seized more clearly than any other symbols of faith have ever done the scriptural idea that the family, rather than the individual, is the unit upon which the church and society are built; that the family of the believer is included in the provisions of God's covenant with him; that the children of believing parents have a place in the visible church, and that baptism, instead of being an empty, meaningless ordinance, to be adminis-

tered indiscriminately to all children, is the appointed sign and seal of a sure covenant between God and the believing parent. The original charter of the church was, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." Its New Testament form is, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved *and thy house*." The grace of God has ever expressed itself through a two-fold covenant. It has not been content to offer life and salvation to the individual believer, but has always included in its offer the children whom God has given him. No smaller gospel can adequately express the exceeding riches of redeeming grace; no smaller gospel can perfectly satisfy the need of the human soul. In vain is the message sent down from heaven to the individual believer, "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him." The parental heart will send back the anxious question, "Is it well with the child?"

That deep yearning of the soul the gospel answers with the assurance that as we confidently commit ourselves, so may we commit our children, into the arms of redeeming love. This precious feature of our holy religion the Westminster Standards clearly expound, and I am not sure but it is their most distinctive glory. Now when this full gospel of the grace of God is embraced; when Jesus Christ is accepted not only as a personal Saviour, but also as the Saviour of the house, Joshua's resolve becomes the natural response of the heart: "As for me *and my house*, we will serve the Lord." The home takes on the character and shape of a religious institution. It becomes a Bethel. The family altar is reared. The rule by which the household is ordered is the word of God. Hence, as a matter of fact, wherever Presbyterianism has prevailed, homes have been found, like the home of Abraham, characterized by two features,

family discipline and family worship. It is no accident that the *Cottar's Saturday Night* was written by a poet trained under the Westminster Standards, and that its scene is laid in a land moulded by Presbyterianism. A Scotch servant-girl hearing the poem read before a company of admiring English people, naively said that she saw nothing very wonderful about it, for that was the way they did at her father's house every night. Such scenes are indigenous to Presbyterian soil; and if our beloved old church ever loses her glory, it will be when the fires go out on her family altars.

3. From such homes as these it is needless to say good citizens come. Children who have first learned to show their piety at home naturally grow up to be loyal, orderly and useful members of society. What the numerous springs scattered through yon western mountains are to your broad and beautiful Catawba, such are the pious homes of a commonwealth to its social and political life. Hence, wherever Presbyterianism has been planted, and has been true to her doctrinal Standards, she has made a distinct impression upon the face of society. She has never failed to bless the state under whose ægis she has dwelt. Not by intermeddling in its administration, or seeking to shape its policies, but in a more legitimate and more effective way: by contributing to the state, men and women who fear God and order their lives and homes according to his word.

But the Westminster Symbols have made one contribution to the weal of society which is so notable as to deserve specific mention; that is, the sanctity with which they have invested the Sabbath-day. The fourth commandment is recognized as perpetually binding, and is enforced by the sanctions of Scripture drawn both from creation and redemption. No other holy day is acknowl-

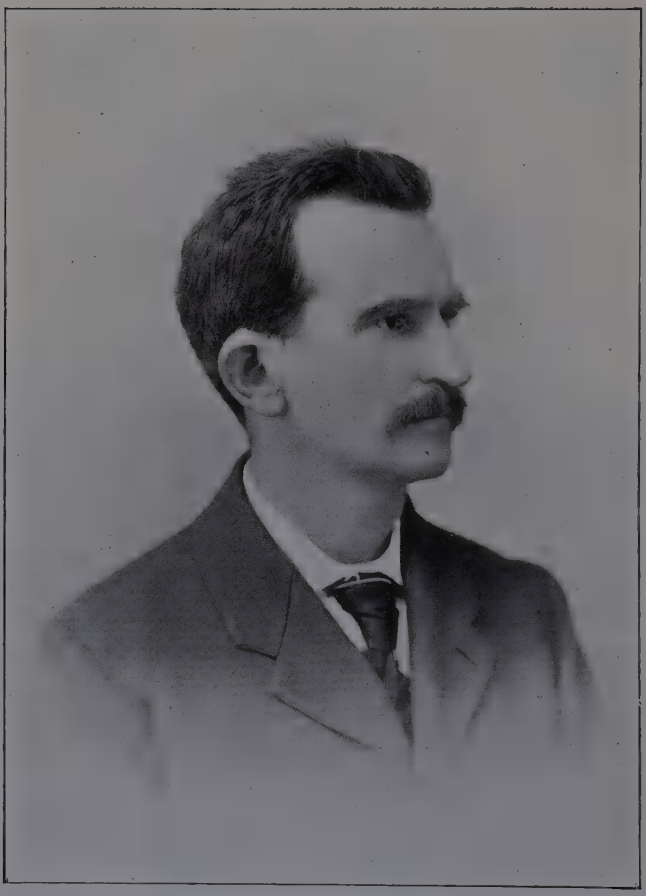
edged. The Sabbath alone is exalted as the one holy day of the church—set apart not by human but by divine appointment. The whole day, it is taught, is to be sanctified by a holy resting, and spent in good works and the public and private exercises of God's worship. Accordingly, Presbyterians the world over have had no more distinctive mark than this that they have been a *Sabbath-keeping people.*

Now the relation which this sacred institution sustains to the welfare of society is too well understood to need any vindication in this presence. The Sabbath law is written as distinctly on man's nature as it ever was on the table of stone. An observance of it is absolutely essential to his physical, moral and social well-being. Daniel Webster said, "The Sabbath is the bulwark of our liberties, because it is the bulwark of morality." Blackstone said, "A corruption of morals usually follows a profanation of the Sabbath." Show me a community where the Sabbath is observed according to the teachings of our Standards, and I will show you an orderly, law-abiding, and moral community. Show me one where the Sabbath is desecrated, and I will show you one which is a very breeding-place of anarchy and vice and crime. The family and the Sabbath! The two institutions of Eden which survived the wreck of the fall! They are the two strong supports of all social order, the Jachin and Boaz upon which human society rests. Let them be disintegrated and social chaos inevitably follows.

These two institutions our venerable Standards exalt as no others do. For their maintenance the Presbyterian Church has always stood. Fathers and brethren and Christian friends, they have been handed down to us as a precious legacy from God-fearing ancestors. We have received them as a high trust, to be passed on in unim-

paired integrity to generations yet to come. Shame upon us if they suffer loss in our hands! When Isaac sojourned in the valley of Gerar he found that the wells which his father Abraham had digged and used had been stopped up by the envious Philistines. They were no longer sources of blessing and refreshment. He showed himself a worthy son of his father by digging them again, that they might be to him and to his all that they had been in his father's day. He thus sought to preserve and perpetuate the good which his father had done. These two springs of blessing have been opened for us, at unspeakable cost, by hearts and hands long stilled in death. We have drunk from them and been refreshed. But alas! the Philistines are at work to close them up with the rubbish of earth and hinder their outflow of blessing. There are no institutions of our holy religion which the great enemy of all good is attacking to-day with more persistent or subtle malignity and zeal. We are threatened with the dire calamity of losing the home and the Sabbath that our forefathers know.

Does not this commemorative occasion summon us by every sacred and inspiring motive to rise up for their defence, to open them up afresh in all their original fulness that they may send their sweet and purifying streams down through the coming years?



HON. WILLIAM M. COX, A. M.

XI.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE WESTMINSTER SYSTEM OF DOCTRINE, WORSHIP AND POLITY ON CIVIL LIBERTY AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

BY

HON. WILLIAM M. COX, A. M.,

RULING ELDER IN THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AT BALDWYN, MISS.

ANALYSIS.

The wide scope of the theme indicated.—The Westminster system older than the Standards.—It is Calvinism.—Its two great postulates.—God holy and sovereign, man sinful and lost.—Redemption founded in God's purpose of grace.—The system a complete philosophy.—The mode of worship simple and spiritual.—Its system of polity representative.—Christ the Head of the church.—Gradation of courts.—A balanced system.—It is popular government according to law.—Calvinism and Presbyterianism have affinity.—Influence of this doctrine, worship and polity great.—It is bold and positive.—Favors education.—Solves problems.—Compact system.—Requires study.—Develops noble character.—Reverences God.—Human government rests on Divine authority.—Noble citizens produced.—Unjust laws resisted.—Anarchy and despotism alike opposed.—Moral sense quickened.—Love of justice produced.—Hence civil liberty and responsible government fostered.—Civil liberty defined.—What it guarantees.—History shows what Calvinism has done for civil liberty.—Instances cited.—Presbyterian polity aided.—People trained to self-government and for leadership.—Specific doctrines aided.—Doctrine of sin humbles pride.—Absolutism destroyed.—Predestination exalts the humble.—Blind submission impossible.—Prince and peasant alike heirs of glory.—Freedom of conscience has same result.—God supreme.—The place and duty of civil magistrate.—No passive obedience.—Cases cited to illustrate.—Calvin's great work discussed.—Its influence traced from Geneva to Holland and Britain.—The dreadful conflict.—Fearful persecutions.—St. Bartholomew's Day.—Louis XIV.—Huguenots.—Philip II.—The Netherlands.—William the Silent.—Scotland and Knox.—England and Cromwell.—The English Revolution.—The Presbyterians and the Independents.—The Covenanters.—The Solemn League and Covenant.—Persecutions and final triumph in Scotland.—The American Revolution the culmination.—The origin and growth of the American colonies traced out.—The Puritans and the Scotch-Irish.—The part they played in securing civil liberty and responsible government in this country.—The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.—Bancroft, Ranke, Morley and Froude quoted.—The verdict of history confirms.

XI.

THE INFLUENCE OF THE WESTMINSTER SYSTEM OF DOCTRINE, WORSHIP AND POLITY ON CIVIL LIBERTY AND RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

THE theme assigned me is a large one. It will be observed that it is not the influence of the Westminster Standards, but of the Westminster System of Doctrine, Worship and Polity on Civil Liberty and Responsible Government which I am expected to discuss upon this occasion.

The system is older than the Standards, and in all its essential features had been formulated long before the sitting of the Westminster Assembly of divines.

The Westminster system of doctrine is, broadly stated, Calvinism. It makes two fundamental postulates: God, a spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth; man, a creature made in the image of God, but fallen from his original state of innocence and blessedness into an estate of sin and misery; corrupted by sin throughout his entire nature, exposed to the penalty of God's retributive justice, and utterly and forever unable of himself to merit God's favor or forgiveness.

Correlated with these, indeed, flowing naturally out of them, is God's gracious scheme of atonement and redemption, determined upon in the divine mind from all eternity, and developed in the fulness of time by the sending forth of the Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to

be a mediator between God and man, who, moved by infinite love and compassion, took the place of those whom the Father had given him, and satisfied in his own person all the demands of the divine justice against them. These, it holds, having been from all eternity predestinated unto everlasting life, are called out of the world, regenerated by God's Spirit, justified by faith in his Son, adopted into the divine family, sanctified by the indwelling Spirit, and kept by the mighty power of God against all the wiles of the wicked one to eternal life.

Why God did not elect to save all men Calvinism does not know. It only knows that such was not his sovereign pleasure. Nor does it know why he chose some and passed by others; but it is assured that it was for reasons which satisfied the divine wisdom and the divine goodness, and it is convinced that but for this election and but for God's enabling grace all men alike had perished, for that all alike would have rejected God's gracious offer of mercy and life.

This system of doctrine is but the philosophic development in their true relation and just proportion of all the teachings of Scripture touching God and man, and God's relations to and dealings with his creatures. It is but the reduction to the crystalline form of science of that great mass of truth contained in the Scriptures in the fluid form of literature. If affords the *rationalé* of Christianity. It is the science of religion.

The Westminster system of worship is marked by great simplicity and the almost entire absence of ceremonial and ritual. It sets apart one day in seven, the Christian Sabbath, wholly to the Lord, to be employed in the private and public exercises of religion. It assembles the people reverently in their houses of worship, where they attend with decorum and gravity while the

Scriptures are read and expounded by an approved minister or teacher, and the congregation lead in the singing of hymns of praise to God and the offering of prayer, adoring his majesty and perfections, thanking him for his goodness and mercy, making confession of sin, and supplication for its forgiveness, and imploring his favor for themselves and all mankind. This system lays special emphasis upon the preaching of the word, holding it to be the power of God unto salvation. It demands of the minister thorough preparation and great diligence and care that he may rightly divide the word and bring the truth level with the understanding of the most unlearned of his hearers. It thus makes of preaching a mighty agency for the education of the people in the highest wisdom and their training in godliness and true holiness. It permits to the minister no assumption of the priestly office. It allows no human intermediary between the soul of man and God. It encourages all to come into the very presence of the Deity, to approach with boldness the throne of grace, and to worship God, who is a spirit, in Spirit and in truth.

The Westminster system of polity is representative republicanism. It acknowledges one, and one only, Head of the Church, and that Christ Jesus our Lord; and it denies that any king or pope is his vicegerent on earth. It holds that the people are, under God, the source of all power, and that no teacher or ruler can be placed over them save by their consent regularly expressed. It commits the government of the individual church to a body of elders freely elected by its members, It groups a number of contiguous churches under the care of a presbytery, composed of the resident ministers and the chosen representatives of the churches. All the presbyteries in any state or nation are, in their turn,

subject to the supervision and control of a General Assembly, composed of the representatives of all the presbyteries. It thus provides a gradation of courts from the session to the General Assembly, all of whose members are upon a footing of absolute equality. It secures local self-government in local affairs, and a true and efficient central authority. It avoids the unmixed despotism of a pope or hierarchy on the one hand, and the looseness of congregational independence on the other. It is throughout a system of popular government according to law. It provides a true authority resting, humanly speaking, in the consent of the governed, and defined by constitutional limitations prescribed by Christ himself, the founder and Head of his Church.

There is perfect congruity between the three systems; while Calvinism in doctrine may be found in connection with Prelacy or Independency in polity, and while Presbyterianism may be joined with Arminianism, and while great simplicity and spirituality in worship may be, and often is, found out of connection with either Calvinism or Presbyterianism, it is yet true that there is a strong natural affinity between them, and they have most often been found together. Each seems to be in a measure dependent on the others for its own fulness and perfection.

The influence of this triple system upon civil institutions has been manifold and great. Of necessity it could not be otherwise. Its influence, however, has been largely mediate and indirect. It has affected government as it has affected the characters, intellectual and moral, of the peoples who live under it.

Calvinism has been the most potent educator for the masses which the world has ever known. Nothing can surpass it as a means of mental culture. It cannot be equalled in its capacity to stimulate and nourish the mental

faculties and develop intellectual power. It invites to the study of problems the most abstruse and profound which ever engage the minds of men. It does not deal in barren negations; it is a bold, a positive and fruitful philosophy; it solves all mysteries; it resolves all doubts touching nature and her phenomena, touching man and his destiny, by its bold assumption of one supreme and eternally inscrutable mystery. In its doctrine of God, the Lord Jehovah, maker and upholder of all things, supreme and rightful ruler of the universe, who knoweth the end from the beginning, and doeth all things after the purpose of his own sovereign will, endowed by necessity with all moral perfections, and filled with love for his intelligent creatures, it lays a broad and deep foundation for a true and satisfying philosophy. Upon this it builds by the most severely logical processes a system of truth closely knit and compacted together, which solves the mystery of human existence and answers the perpetual questionings of the human consciousness. What am I? Whence am I? Whither do I go? are questions which have perplexed the minds of the thoughtful in all time. They are of everlasting human interest. They will not down, but clamor for an answer. Calvinism answers them with a fulness which no other system does, and to the mind accepting its fundamental postulates the answer is absolutely conclusive.

He who would comprehend this system must gird up the loins of his mind for strenuous endeavor. He has undertaken no idle task, to be accomplished in an hour, but one which will tax to the utmost all his powers of thought, and afford exercise for a lifetime to all his mental faculties. As a mere instrument of mental discipline it cannot be surpassed, for it lays under contribution all literature, all science, all philosophy; and, dealing

with the most difficult and pressing problems that present themselves to human thought, it resolves them by showing their relation to its great fundamental assumption. Wherever it has been wisely and generally taught it has mightily stimulated thought among the people and developed among them a high order of intellectual power. But it not only developes intellectual power, for it also begets mental poise and balance and conduces to intellectual repose. He who accepting its great regulative principles has traced them out to all which they logically involve can no longer be agitated by intellectual doubts and fears. The riddle of the universe for him has been solved. The mystery of his own being has been made plain. Chaos has become Cosmos.

The universe is seen to be the work of a supreme intelligence, and its moral government forever established. The distinction between good and evil, between right and wrong, between holiness and sin, is seen to be fundamental and everlasting, and the ultimate triumph of right inevitable. He who has reached these conclusions is no longer the sport of error and false doctrine. He is no more like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. But his convictions are established upon a rock, and he can exclaim, "My mind is fixed, O Lord, my mind is fixed." But great as have been its effects in developing intellectual power and stability, its influence upon moral character has been even greater. There is a subtle law of our spiritual natures by which we become assimilated to our thoughts, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

Our opinions, true or false, mightily influence our conduct and character. Especially is this true when men heartily receive and hospitably entertain a great system of truth dealing with matters of supremest moment and

interest, and having for its chief end the determination of conduct in the highest concerns of life. If, now, this system be a revelation of himself, his will and purposes by the supreme intelligence, and be applied to the mind and heart by his enlightening Spirit, it becomes a controlling and transforming power in character and life.

Calvinists have always been noted for certain great traits which may be taken as the natural fruitage of the system. Chief among them is a profound reverence for God and his authority, a profound conviction that he and he only is to be feared and obeyed. And as under this system all rightful human authority must be derived from and must rest ultimately upon God's sovereign authority, and as obedience to all rightful human authority is obedience to God himself, this supreme reverence for God is accomplished by a spirit of obedience to all just human authority and all righteous human law. This spirit of obedience to rightful authority has marked the Calvinistic peoples in their civil relations in every age and country, and has made of them orderly and law-abiding citizens in every just government under which they have lived. But this supreme reverence for God and supreme allegiance to his authority begets a spirit of instinctive resistance to all unjust authority and all unrighteous law. These are recognized as usurpations, which it is a duty to God to resist and put down. And so Calvinism opposes its adherents in their fundamental characteristics to anarchy and the license of the mob on the one hand, and to the autocratic misrule of a despot on the other.

With this reverence for God and his authority there goes ever a keen appreciation of moral distinctions and an abiding consciousness of human guilt, weakness, and imperfections. Truth, justice, right, perfect holiness,

are felt to be of everlasting obligation, and absolute perfection the only worthy end of human effort.

The Calvinistic standard of human character is a high one, so high, indeed, as to be recognized at once as impossible of attainment in this life and under present conditions. But it challenges to an unending struggle with the selfish and lawless appetites and professions of our fallen natures, and affords the strongest possible incentives to strenuous endeavor after moral excellence. It is not too much to claim that the Calvinistic peoples have been marked by a love of truth and justice, a devotion to duty, an unswerving allegiance to right, a personal uprightness and purity of character, not surpassed by the adherents of any other creed or system. We may with confidence maintain that the world has never known a higher type of stalwart manhood, nor a gentler, purer, or more lovable womanhood than have prevailed among those peoples into whose hearts and life has entered this Calvinistic creed, with its commingled elements of granitic strength and stability, and of supreme, because divine, tenderness and grace.

It can be seen, then, that Calvinism has made a most important contribution to the cause of civil liberty and responsible government, by developing in the peoples to whom it has been both a creed and a life-power those intellectual and moral qualities without which civil liberty and responsible government were forever impossible. No people can ever have a better government than they deserve; no people can ever achieve and enjoy civil liberty until they have learned that it does not mean unbridled license. Civil liberty is liberty regulated by law. It guarantees to every citizen the full enjoyment of all just rights and privileges, conditioned upon his own recognition and observance of the rights and privileges of

others. It presupposes a high degree of popular intelligence, and a general spirit of obedience to law.

Until these have been attained, the most perfect constitution of government the genius of man could possibly devise, it matters not how liberal it might be in theory, would prove worthless in practice, and though the forms of freedom might be preserved, would result in despotism and oppression.

It is a most notable fact in this connection that those nations, which in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, that crucial epoch in the liberty of free institutions, made the most determined struggle against absolutism in church and state, and for civil and religious freedom, were precisely those which had been brought most fully under the training and discipline of Calvinism.

The freest people in the world to-day must trace their institutions back through the England, the Scotland, the Netherlands, of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, to the Geneva of Calvin; and the England, the Scotland, the Netherlands of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were to their heart's core intensely Calvinistic. They won civil liberty and established responsible governments because Calvinism had made them desire to be free, and had fitted them to achieve and enjoy freedom.

The Presbyterian polity also contributed largely to this end. It furnished the people in their ecclesiastical affairs a pure type of representative republicanism. It habituated them to self-government. It trained them to self-restraint. It taught them independence and self-reliance. It developed among them a capacity for leadership, and a power of command which served them equally well when applied to affairs of state. It furnished a system equally as well adapted to the state as to the church. It stimulated in them a desire for civil liberty. No peo-

ple accustomed to govern themselves in one sphere could ever become reconciled to an unmixed despotism in the other.

There are, however, certain specific teachings of Calvinism which have had a more direct influence than those just mentioned upon civil government, and which in the long and desperate struggle which raged in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries between absolutism and freedom, played an indispensable part.

Its doctrine of sin and depravity has been the greatest of all levellers. It includes all men under sin, from the slave in his hovel to the king on his throne. No rank or station, however exalted, can exempt from this universal condition. All men alike, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, the noble and the base born, are involved in the same guilt, share the same depravity, are exposed to the same condemnation. In the light of this tremendous fact all earthly distinctions disappear, and the privileges of birth and caste are seen to be without adequate foundation. The pretensions of the high born to an innate superiority and consequent right to lord it over the masses are dissipated, and the pride of the great is humbled into the dust. The spell of their greatness is broken, and the meanest peasant can see and feel that the mightiest noble, or even the king himself, is, after all, barring the accidents of birth and fortune, but a man like himself. All men are seen to be equal in the sight of God and before his righteous law, all men are seen to owe to God supreme allegiance, and to all men alike it is seen that the same offer of mercy is made upon the same conditions.

The inference is easy, that if all men are equal before the law of God, they should also be recognized as equals by the law of man. Hence, there emerges clearly to

view the great axiom of modern democracy, that all men are created equal and vested with certain inalienable rights. This principle, properly limited, is Calvin's rather than Jefferson's.

But if its doctrine of sin abased the pride and humbled the pretensions of the great, its doctrine of predestination exalted the lowly. To the arrogance and pride which went with earthly power, the simple peasant, conscious within himself of his high calling of God in Christ Jesus, could oppose a yet higher pride. "Though his name did not appear in the register of heralds, it was recorded in the book of life." Though unknown among men beyond the limits of his lord's estate, he was known in the councils of heaven. His name was among those whom the Father from all eternity had given to the Son in an everlasting covenant. He had been bought with a great price, had been saved with a great salvation; for in his stead the Prince of Glory had died upon the tree. Though base born, he yet shared the highest royalty. Though poor in this world's goods, yet all things were his. He felt himself to be an heir of God and a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. God himself had made him free, and it was not within the province of earthly power to make him a slave. And he knew that it "had not pleased God to call many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble; but that God had chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and base things of the world, and things that were despised had God chosen; yea, and things which were not, to bring to naught the things which were." And all whom God had chosen were equals and brethren, and if any would be great among them, he must become the servant of all.

This conviction stimulated in those who cherished it a feeling of pride and a sense of dignity and worth which upheld and sustained them under the scorn and contempt of their earthly superiors, and enabled them, when occasion demanded, to outface the pride of nobles and kings. It transformed the hind into a man and a hero, and, when the days of fierce fighting came, it filled the armies of Condé, of William the Silent and of Cromwell with yeomen, artisans and shop-keepers fit to stand against the chivalry of Europe.

Another principle of Calvinism which has made an important contribution to the cause of civil liberty is its teaching concerning freedom of conscience, that "God only is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men, which are in anything contrary to his word or beside it in faith or worship." This is involved in the entire Calvinistic conception of man in his relations with God. It is of the very essence of Calvinism. It is a principle which is utterly subversive of the spiritual over-lordship of Pope and hierarchy and of all pretensions upon the part of the civil power to control the subject in matters of religion.

In its logical outcome it limits the authority of the state strictly to matters secular, and leads inevitably to the entire independence and separation of church and state.

Intimately connected with its teaching concerning freedom of conscience is its doctrine of the civil magistrate. It holds that he is a minister of God ordained to be under him over the people for God's glory and the public good, that he is armed with the power of the sword for the defence and encouragement of them that are good and the punishment of evil-doers, and that he is to be obeyed in all his lawful commands. There is a

vast deal contained in that last clause. It places a sharp limitation upon the duty of the subject to the ruler, and saps the very foundation of absolutism. If the civil magistrate is to be obeyed in his lawful commands, he is to be disobeyed in those which are unrighteous and unlawful and contrary to God's law of right and truth. Calvinism is perfectly consistent with itself and the written word in holding that we ought to obey God rather than man.

Calvinists have never held the craven doctrine of passive obedience. The Reformed or Calvinistic churches of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries stood practically alone in teaching that tyrants were usurpers and were to be resisted and deposed. Luther himself counseled non-resistance to tyranny, declaring that a wicked tyrant was better than a wicked war. The prelates of the Anglican Church, when the liberties of Britain and the world were trembling in the balance, prostrated themselves at the feet of a wicked tyrant, proclaimed to the world that he could do no wrong, and exhorted the people to submit while their ancient liberties were trampled in the dust, the constitution of their country subverted, and themselves subjected to the irresponsible power of a corrupt, ruthless despotism.

But Calvinism proclaimed resistance to tyrants to be obedience to God. It nerved the people to undying opposition to absolutism in church and state, and transformed a simple peasantry into the most magnificent fighting force in Christendom.

When in the sixteenth century the human intellect, roused by the renascence of the ancient learning from the torpor of centuries, and freed from the shackles of superstition, began to devote itself to the earnest and reverent study of God's word, especially when the truths

of that word loosely scattered upon its surface were by the transcendent genius of Calvin gathered up and wrought into a system, at once the true science of religion and the highest and most faithful philosophy ever promulgated among men, the seeds of revolution were scattered broadcast over Europe. Again was to be verified the saying of the Master, that he had not come to send peace on earth but a sword.

While the system dealt chiefly with the relations of men to God, it involved also incidentally their relations to each other. While concerned chiefly with the life to come, it did not disdain to teach men their rights in the life which now is.

In common with all Protestantism it was a revolt against spiritual sovereignties, but it went further and in its essential principles assailed the foundations of all despotism, civil as well as ecclesiastical. Radiating from Geneva, it spread rapidly over Central and Western Europe and the British Islands. Wherever it obtained a foothold it roused a spirit of opposition to civil despotism, as well as ecclesiastical domination. No more radical system had ever been promulgated, nor one more fitted to stir society as then constituted from centre to circumference. It struck at the root of all errors, whether in the church or state. It was at once instinctively recognized as the natural enemy of all irresponsible power; and it was perceived by princes and prelates alike that, if permitted to run unchecked, the world's dynasties and hierarchies were doomed, and that Europe must soon pass from the domination of kings and popes to a government in both civil and ecclesiastical affairs by the people and for the people.

This would have been a blessed consummation, but the powers of darkness were all roused to prevent it, and

in their furious onslaught the cause of civil liberty and human progress was held back for generations, and throughout the larger and fairer parts of Europe either hopelessly checked or grievously wounded and distorted.

There is nothing in human annals of more surpassing interest than the united struggle of the papacy and the great Catholic monarchs to beat back and stamp out the flaming truths of Calvinism, and to overwhelm and exterminate its adherents. The fires of the Inquisition prevented its ever getting a firm footing in Italy or Spain. It was soon throttled in Belgium, in Bavaria, in Bohemia, Austria, and Poland. It struggled long and desperately in France. The Calvinists of that country struggled for decades with what seemed an unconquerable courage to vindicate their right to live as freemen and worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences. They poured out their blood like water.

"It has been reckoned," says Jonathan Edwards, "that about this time within thirty years there were martyred in this kingdom, for the Protestant religion, thirty-nine princes, one hundred and forty-eight counts, two hundred and thirty-four barons, one hundred and forty-seven thousand five hundred and eighteen gentlemen, and seven hundred and sixty thousand of the common people." What a holocaust of victims! What a contribution upon the part of Presbyterians and Calvinists of martyrs to civil liberty and freedom of conscience. In one day, the never-to-be-forgotten 24th day of August, 1572, upon signal given by the cathedral bell, there were butchered in cold blood seventy-five thousand men, women, and children by the minions of the Pope and with the consent of the king. This terrible atrocity was deemed worthy by the Pope of special commemoration by

the striking of a medal and services of thanksgiving in the churches of Rome. But it needed no special commemoration. The friends of human rights will never let it be forgotten. The massacre of St. Bartholomew will stand while men love justice and right and freedom of thought and of conscience, as the monumental crime against the rights of humanity. It is a damned spot which all great Neptune's ocean could never wash out. It is a flaming beacon light to warn all the generations of the future.

But the odds against the Calvinists were too great. They were conquered, but for a time were not utterly destroyed. Some measure of toleration was extended them until Louis XIV. revoked the edict of Nantes, formally suppressed the reformed religion, and banished every Protestant pastor from the realm. This blow practically destroyed the Reformed Church in France. It was followed by an enormous emigration of the Huguenots to the immense gain of every country which received them, but to the everlasting undoing of France. She has never recovered, can never recover, from the loss of their piety, their pure morality, their stability and strength of character, their patriotism, their aptness for all the arts of peace and war. In her madness, she had thrust out her best. France has been ever since like a ship without ballast, wallowing in the waves, which ever and anon threaten to engulf her. After the Revolution and the Terror, after her wild dreams of conquest, after her overthrow and humiliation by her ancient enemy, she again has peace. She has also the forms, but she lacks the genius and spirit of freedom. She is passing from the first place in Europe to one of comparative imbecility, while her place is taken by a nation of purer faith and sterner morals.

Cotemporary with the persecution of the Huguenots

in France was the effort of Philip II., head of the Austro-Spanish monarchy, to suppress the reformed religion in the Netherlands. This brave, enterprising, and intelligent people had early received the Calvinistic system in its entirety. They speedily renounced their spiritual subordination to the Pope and sympathized deeply with their co-religionists in other countries in their efforts to win freedom of conscience and worship. But they were not to be permitted to enjoy this sight themselves without first passing through the fires of a persecution unsurpassed in atrocity, and waging a defensive warfare for decades not less desperate, but in the end more fortunate than that of the Huguenots. Philip, who was a most bigoted Catholic, had made it the purpose of his life to destroy Protestantism and dragoon the peoples of Europe back into spiritual dependence upon Rome, while at the same time he utterly destroyed all their aspirations for civil liberty. He sent against the brave Hollanders not only the best equipped and most veteran troops in Europe, but also the most experienced and skilful generals then living. He employed in his crusade against the schismatics not only all the arts of honorable warfare, but also the axe of the executioner, the knife of the assassin and the torch of the incendiary. The brutality, the lust, the terrible atrocity of the Spaniards upon the taking and sacking of towns and cities had passed into history under the name of the Spanish Terror. The cruel Alva boasted that besides the multitudes slain in battle he had committed eighteen thousand to the executioner, and this because they feared God more than they feared Philip, and preferred to die rather than to play traitors to the truth. The brave Hollanders, under their great stadtholder, William the Silent, struggled on amid terrible reverses till Leyden alone of their principal cities held

out. This city was closely invested and was near its fall, and when Leyden should fall the good cause would be irretrievably lost. In this dire extremity their spirit equalled their peril. They resolved to invoke the aid of the elements. They cut the dykes which held back the North Sea. A mighty tempest from the northwest rolled in the raging waters and Leyden was saved. They saved their freedom though they drowned their land; and under the princes of the House of Orange they built up a great Protestant commonwealth which long served as a mighty bulwark against all the aggressions of absolutism, and furnished an asylum to fugitives from religious persecution from all the countries of Europe. They eventually furnished the prince under whom the liberties of the British people were firmly secured.

While these things were happening upon the continent a work was being done across the channel in Scotland, which has made of her an inspiration to the lovers of civil and religious freedom the world over, and has borne most notable fruit for these three centuries. John Knox, the third of the great triumvirate of reformers, after a season spent at Geneva, where he had enjoyed the tuition of Calvin had mastered his system and caught his spirit, returned to his native land. He labored diligently and fearlessly for the spread of the truth, and with so much success that Scotland was won for the Reformed faith and Presbyterianism fully established. So thoroughly was the work done that three centuries and more have not been able to undo it, and the consequent change in Scottish character and life was so great as to have been likened to a resurrection from death. But let Carlyle speak, "In the history of Scotland, too, I can find properly but one epoch. We may say that it contains nothing of world interest at all but this Reformation

by Knox. A poor barren country, full of continual broils, dissensions, massacrings. Bravery enough, no doubt, fierce fighting in abundance, but not braver nor fiercer than that of their old Scandinavian sea-king ancestor—a country in the last stage of rudeness and destitution nothing developed in it but what was rude, external, semi-animal—and now at the Reformation the internal life was kindled under the ribs of this outward material death. This that Knox did for his nation we may really call a resurrection from death. The Puritanism of Scotland became that of England, of New England.

"A tumult in the High Church at Edinburgh spread into universal battle and struggle over all these realms. After fifty years struggling there came out what we call the glorious revolution, *habeas corpus* act, free parliaments, and much else. Alas, is it not too true what we said that many men in the van do always like Russian soldiers march into the ditch at Schwiedmitz and fill it with their dead bodies, that the rear may pass over them dry-shod and gain the honor.

"How many earnest, rugged Cromwells, Knoxes, poor peasant Covenanters, wrestling, battling for very life in rough, miry places, have to suffer, and struggle, and fall, greatly censured, bemired, before a beautiful revolution of eighty-eight can step over them in official pumps and silk stockings, with universal three times three."

Presbyterianism in Scotland was one of the chief factors in vindicating the liberties of the British people. It has always been obnoxious to the Stuart dynasty, who regarded it as inimical to monarchy. "Presbytery," said James I., "doth consist with monarchy as well as God with the devil." The attempt to suppress it in the interest of prelacy precipitated the civil war, which

ended as all know in the overthrow of the king and his execution by Parliament for treason against the laws and liberties of England.

This great struggle was upon the part of Parliament a war by the Calvinists of Scotland and England against absolutism in church and state, and for civil and religous freedom. For whatever the names by which the adherents of Parliament were known, whatever their views upon church polity, they were at one upon doctrine, and were strongly Calvinistic. That this is true is amply verified by the Westminster Standards, promulgated under the auspices of the Long Parliament, which we this day celebrate.

This is not the occasion to discuss the differences which sprung up between the Presbyterians and Independents. It can never be known whether had the views and plans of the former prevailed, England would have had as the immediate result of the war a limited monarchy, with ample guarantee for the liberties of the subject, and the Revolution of 1688 been anticipated for more than a generation. But it is evident that such was their hope and purpose.

The Independents, however, triumphed through the genius of Cromwell, who for some years, as Lord Protector gave to England a government of great power, vigor, and wisdom, but which was after all as thorough-going a despotism as that which Charles I. lost life and crown in seeking to establish. The restoration of Charles II., after the death of Cromwell, and consequent overthrow of the commonwealth, was for the time the utter undoing of all for which the Puritans had fought, and introduced a worse despotism than that of Charles I. The Presbyterians, especially, felt the utmost severity of the royal displeasure.

The Stuarts, though a Scottish house, had always hated and feared the Scottish kirk, and now for twenty-eight years Charles, and afterward his brother James, exhausted every resource of craft and power to break the spirit of the Scottish people, destroy their national church, and root out the last vestige of Presbyterianism from the realm.

The patient endurance, the inflexible resolution, the unshaken constancy, the heroic devotion of the Presbyterians of Scotland under this fiery ordeal constitute one of the marvels of history.

All Scotland was reddened with blood. Claverhouse and his troopers, like ravenous wolves, pursued God's elect through crags and fens. Eighteen thousand suffered martyrdom for the truth. Men, women and children were shot, were hanged, were beheaded, were thrust through with the sword, were drowned in the tide. This persecution recalls the suffering of God's ancient people. Paul seems to have been uttering prophecy as well as recording history when he said, "And some had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea also of bonds and imprisonment. They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword. They wandered about in sheep skins and goat skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented (of whom the world was not worthy). They wandered in deserts and in mountains, in dens and caves of the earth." But they conquered in the end. Had they proven recreant to the truth, had the stern old covenanters once yielded, the cause of civil and religious freedom would have met a reverse from which it might never have recovered. But they kept the faith, and succor came. Through their initiative and assistance the Revolution of '88 was made an accomplished fact. Through their invincible

courage and unyielding constancy they won for themselves freedom of conscience and worship, and prepared the way for the general diffusion of civil liberty throughout the English-speaking world.

But the chief act in the great drama was the American Revolution and the founding of the American Republic. Here the political principles of Calvinism have been most fully wrought out, and their beneficent effects most fully realized. Here, for the first time in history, the church has been made entirely independent of the state, and the fullest freedom of conscience guaranteed to all men. Here the Calvinistic principle of representative republicanism has been fully accepted; and through it has been secured local self-government in local affairs, together with a true and efficient central authority, while at the same time it has avoided imperial centralization with its inevitable tendency to despotism on the one hand, and the excessive multiplication of petty sovereignties with their conflicting interests and pretensions on the other, and the perpetuity of our institutions seeming now to be secured, absolutism is doomed. The principle of civil liberty and responsible government is triumphant, and nothing remains among civilized peoples but the gradual working of it out in detail. While the credit for this grand result does not belong exclusively to any one race or sect among the American people, it is yet true that the influences which brought it about were predominantly Calvinistic and largely Presbyterian.

The population of the colonies at the time of the Revolution had been drawn most largely from Calvinistic sources, had been brought up under Calvinistic discipline, and had imbibed freely of Calvinistic ideals. When we remember that the Puritans of New England, the Dutch of New York, a full half of the Germans of Penn-

sylvania, Maryland and Virginia, the Scotch of New Jersey, the Scotch-Irish of Pennsylvania, Virginia and the Carolinas, the Huguenots of South Carolina (but these people were scattered in considerable numbers through all the colonies), were all of them Calvinists, and practically all of them save the first-named were Presbyterians, we are prepared to appreciate the part borne by Calvinists and Presbyterians in the vindication of American rights and the establishment of our free institutions.

The part borne by the Puritans of New England in the agitation which led to the war is common history, and need not be recounted here. It is not so generally known that the Presbyterians in all the colonies were, to a man, the early and steadfast friends and champions of American rights, and were the first to declare for complete independence. The Presbyterian ministers contributed largely to the success of the Revolution by preaching the duty of resisting tyranny, and inspiring the people with confidence in God's overruling care and protection.

The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians were the first to adopt a policy looking to the severing of all connection with the mother country.

The Scotch-Irish settlers upon the Watauga and the Holston Assembly at Abingdon in January, 1775, resolved that "we are resolutely and unalterably determined never to surrender our inestimable privileges to any power on earth but at the expense of our lives."

The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians of Western Pennsylvania, assembled at Hanna's Town in May, 1776, resolved to oppose by force of arms the aggressions of the British Parliament, and to coincide in any scheme that might be formed for the defence of America.

The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians of the good county of Mecklenburg, in the brave State of North Carolina, assembled in May, 1775, in the then hamlet, but now beautiful and historic city of Charlotte, and within earshot of your place of assembly, and adopted a Declaration of Independence and a well-digested scheme of government; and they did this more than a year before Washington and Jefferson had ceased to hope for a reconciliation with the mother country, or the Continental Congress sufficiently mastered its fears to renounce its allegiance to the British crown. Bancroft is fully warranted in declaring that the first voice publicly raised in America for severing all connection with Great Britain came not from the Puritans of New England, nor the Dutch of New York, nor the planters of Virginia, but from the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians.

The Mecklenburg declaration will stand while free institutions endure as a monument to the devotion of Presbyterians to civil liberty and responsible government.

But the lapse of time admonishes me that I must bring this address to a close. Though tempted to go more fully into the history of the war of the Revolution and the adoption of the Federal Constitution, and to show more in detail the part borne by Calvinists and Presbyterians both in field and council, I must desist, lest I weary you overmuch, nor can I, though the theme be an inviting one, consume more of your time to show the need of Calvinism for the future as a great conservative power to resist the disintegrating influence now at work in all civilized states, tending to the denial and subversion of all legitimate authority and the bringing in of anarchy and the wild license of the mob. I must be content to quote in support of the main contention of this address the testimony of some eminent, competent, and disinterested authorities.

Bancroft, the historian of the United States, in speaking of Calvinism, calls it "the system which for a century and a half assumed the guardianship of liberty for the English-speaking world"; and again he says that "the genius of Calvin infused enduring elements into the institution of Geneva, and made of it for the modern world the impregnable fortress of popular liberty, the fertile seed plot of democracy."

John Morley, the great radical, has recently declared that "Calvinism saved Europe."

Ranke, the historian of the Popes, asserts that "John Calvin was virtually the founder of America."

Froude, the English historian, in his lecture on "Calvinism" at St. Andrew's University, used this language: "I shall ask you again why, if it be a creed of intellectual servitude, it was able to inspire and sustain the bravest efforts ever made by men to break the yoke of unjust authority? When all else has failed, when patriotism has covered its face and human courage broken down, when intellect has yielded, as Gibbon says, with a smile or a sign, content to philosophize in the closet and abroad to worship with the vulgar, when emotion and sentiment and tender imaginative piety have become the handmaids of superstition, and have dreamt themselves into forgetfulness that there is any difference between lies and truth, this slavish belief called Calvinism has in one or another of its forms borne ever an inflexible front against illusions and mendacity, and has preferred rather to be ground to powder like flint than to bend before violence or melt under enervating temptation."

Upon these conclusions of history, I am satisfied to rest the case.

School of Theology
at Claremont

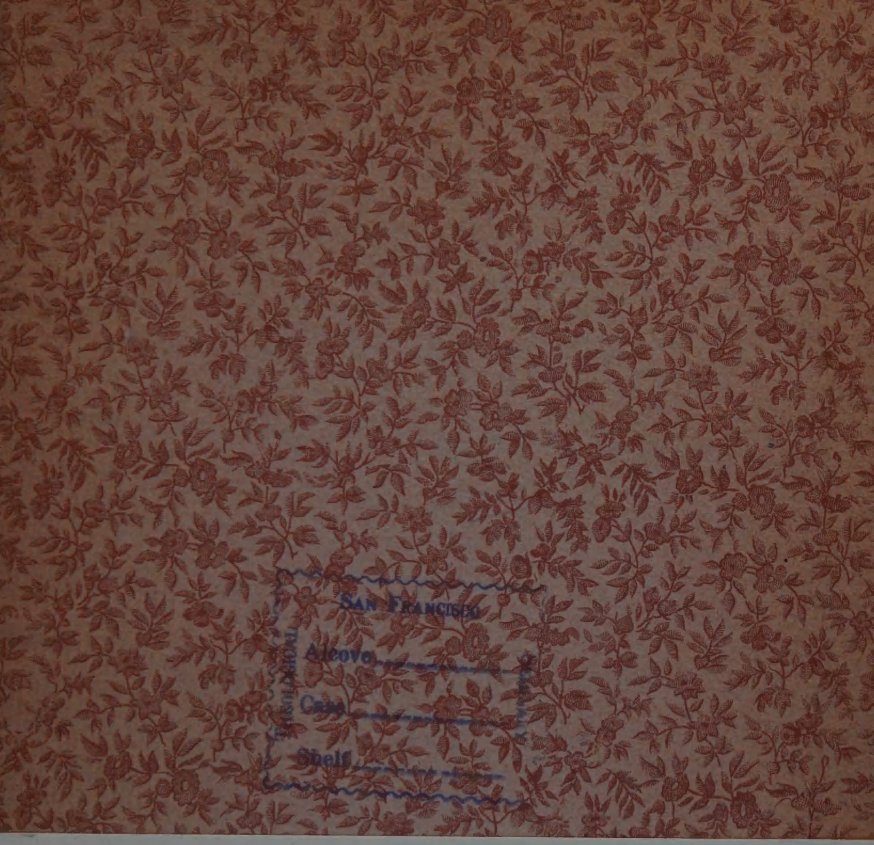
BX
9053
A5
P8
1897

Presbyterian church in the United States. *General assembly.* Memorial volume of the Westminster assembly ... [1897] (Card 2)

Bibliography: p. xxxii-xxxviii.

CONTENTS.--Introduction, by F. R. Beattie.—The political history of the time, by H. A. White.--The religious situation at the time, by Robert Price.--The Westminster assembly itself, by T. D. Witherspoon.—The doctrinal contents of the confession, by R. L. Dabney.—The catechisms, by G. B. Strickler.—The polity and worship of the standards, by Eugene Daniel.—The relation of the standards to other creeds, by J. D. Tadlock.—The standards and missionary activity, by M. D. Hoge.—The standards in relation to current theology, by S. M. Smith.--The standards in relation to family and social life, by J. F. Cannon.—The standards and civil government, by W. M. Cox.

1. Westminster assembly of divines--Addresses, essays, lectures.



BX
9053
A5
P8
1897

Presbyterian church in the United States. *General assembly.*

Memorial volume of the Westminster assembly. 1647–1897. Containing ... addresses delivered before the General assembly of the Presbyterian church in the United States, at Charlotte, N. C., in May, 1897. In commemoration of the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the Westminster assembly, and of the formation of the Westminster standards. 2d ed. ... Richmond, Va., The Presbyterian committee of publication [1897]

xxxviii, [2], 297 p. front., pl., ports. 20½cm.

(Continued on next card)

A11839